

INSIDE



Fat prize for Fred

POCK Fred Oatway had a fat chance of losing with this carving of a parrot in fat entered in the RN Salon Culinaire. Fred, serving in HMS York, won a silver medal. Results and more pictures — Page 29.



London in Albania

AN ALBANIAN orphan gets a helping hand from WEM(O) Richard Lane. See HMS London's visit to Durres — Page 17.



Picture power

"CONTACT Bearing 045" is the title of this taut picture by LA(PHOT) Paul Smith who helped to win the Peregrine Trophy for the Photographic Section at RN air station Culdrose. More in our centre pages.

ROYAL DAY FOR A DUKE

WITH the rays of the winter sun reflecting on her superstructure, the Duke-class frigate HMS Lancaster cuts a dash as she steams up the Thames to keep an appointment with the Queen.

Her Majesty visited the ship during Lancaster's visit to London. She was cheered as she arrived alongside at Canary Wharf (see inset) and met members of the ship's company and their families on board.

The Queen launched the Type 22 frigate in 1990.

FRONT LINE FIRST!

NO CUTBACK in commitments — but a lot less cash to pay for them. That was the Chancellor's Budget message to the Royal Navy.

Memories of D-Day?

WERE you a member of the Royal Navy or Royal Marines involved in the D-Day landings? If so Navy News would like to hear your story with a view to including it in our D-Day supplements planned for May and June.

Do not send photographs at this stage but please indicate whether you have relevant pictures which you would be prepared to make available to Navy News. All photographic material sent to us will be returned.

Write giving your name, address and telephone number to "D-Day Memories," Navy News, Barham Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, Hants PO1 3HH.

The Chancellor made it clear that there would be a significant reduction in the money available for defence over the next three years, compared with what had been assumed under last year's plans.

To establish "an even tauter, and leaner" Navy that will still be properly manned and equipped to maintain its current range of capabilities will be, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Benjamin Bathurst told Navy News, "a huge challenge" in the coming months — particularly on already very hard-pressed shore staffs.

"All areas of naval business in support of the front line — bases, shore establishments, HQs, depots and so on — will have to be examined.

"There is good sense in taking a more lateral look at the

way we structure and support our business.

"We must take this opportunity to exploit new thinking, remove duplication, and streamline and establish sensible, enduring command and support structures which are designed for crisis management with greatly increased delegation."

Savings

Some of the savings ordered — £260m for 1994-95; £520m for 1995-96; with expenditure in 1996-97 4.2 per cent. lower in real terms than the previous plans for 1995-96 — are expected to come from the

● Turn to Page 3



FRS2 STARTS TRIALS ON BOARD ARK ROYAL

Seagoing debut by Super Harrier

THIS is the first picture of the Royal Navy's new Sea Harrier FRS2 showing its paces at sea. The upgraded fighter has started sea trials on board HMS Ark Royal which recently returned from Deny Flight operations in the Adriatic.

The new aircraft's state-of-the-

art Blue Vixen radar is capable of tracking a multitude of targets over land and sea, while the FRS2's weapons include AM-RAAM air-to-air missiles which can be launched effectively beyond visual range of the target.

Commanding officer of Ark Royal, Capt Terry Loughran, said

the improvements will provide the Navy with "the most capable and versatile fighter aircraft that Britain possesses and arguably one of the best in Europe."

Describing FRS2 as an exciting development, he said it would further enhance Britain's ability to

carry out combat operations and operations in support of UN peacekeeping.

"Carrier based aircraft can be deployed worldwide in support of national objectives without the need to rely upon the guarantee of other nations," he said.

Picture: LA(PHOT) Steve Saywell



WOW! HERE COME THE WETS

BR 1066 (the Relative Rates Table) has been amended since absorption of the WRNS — and in some cases has produced the inevitable amusing acronym.

Female Warrant Officers we should not be surprised to learn are WOWs, while if a WOW is an Aircraft Handler, she is doubly appreciated as a WOW(AH).

Petty Officers of the gentle sex may be a little disconcerted by their new description as POWs, while a Wren Education and Training Support rating first class becomes — yes, you've guessed it — a WETS!!

Acronymia

All this adds up to an already well-established list of smirk-inducing abbreviations for the chaps: how could the author who branded Warrant Officer Cooks as WOOCKs keep a straight face? Did he (or she) betray a bad experience in the Ops Room by abbreviating Warrant Officer (Operations) to WO(OPS)? It is unlikely we will ever know, but we can be fairly sure of further examples of acronymia in any future amendment to 1066 (and all that).

Museum's timely buy

AN historically important pocket chronometer dating from the 18th Century has been bought by the National Maritime Museum for an undisclosed sum.

The instrument, sold at Christie's by private treaty, was made in London in 1778 by watchmaker John Arnold and was the first to have a temperature-compensated balance. The innovation was vital for global voyages of exploration necessary for the expansion of Britain's maritime empire.

Many examples of Arnold pocket chronometers exist but none has such importance for the history of precision time-keeping and not one remains as well preserved.

Memorial church for Fleet Air Arm

YEOVILTON village's former parish church has a new role as the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church.

St Bartholomew's was dedicated to the FAA by the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Ven. Michael Bucks on the anniversary of the Battle of Taranto. The service was conducted in the presence of the Principal Chaplain of the Church of Scotland and Free Churches, and the Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain.

In the congregation was the Second Sea Lord Sir Michael Layard (a former Flag Officer Naval Aviation); the previous FONA, Rear Admiral Colin Cooke-Priest, and his successor, Rear Admiral Ian Garnett.

The church now becomes the Anglican Church for RN air station Yeovilton. Its close connection with HMS Heron began when the air station was built before the Second World War.

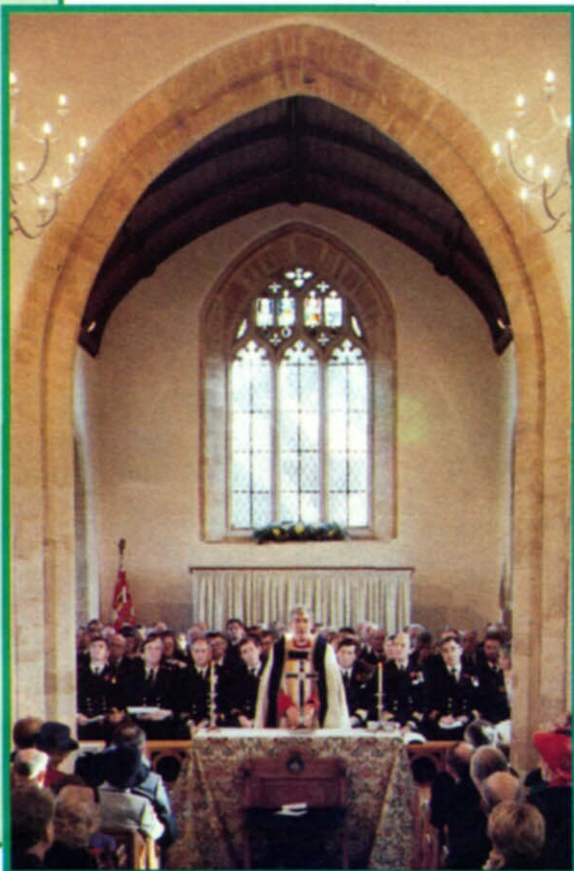
The station church, St Augustine's, was not licensed for marriages and burials so many weddings and, sadly, funerals of naval personnel took place at St Bartholomew's.

During the war flying training casualties mounted under the pressure of the conflict, and after the 15th interment in the churchyard the Admiralty bought the present naval cemetery next to St Bartholomew's.

Two years ago, after the church had been declared redundant, it was transferred to the Trustees of the FAA Memorial Church for £1. However, a structural survey showed that restoration would cost £300,000, most of which has now been raised by public appeal.

Many contributions have been made by Service and ex-Service people, civilians, groups and companies. The renovation of the church has also been made possible by the work of the Chaplaincy and Church Committee at RNAS Yeovilton.

● RIGHT: Chaplain of the Fleet, the Ven. Michael Bucks, dedicates St Bartholomew's.



Picture: LA(PHOT) Mark Hipkin



Picture: LA(PHOT) Andy White

FINE DAWN FOR WESTMINSTER

HMS Westminster in dawn's early light enters Plymouth Sound on her first arrival at Devonport. The new Duke-class frigate was accepted into service at her home base in November, as reported in last month's Navy News.

Taking a new line on Royal Dockyard

THE train now standing at Platform 2 is "Devonport Royal Dockyard 1693-1993". But that's not its time and destination — it's the locomotive's name.

It may be a mouthful, but they're proud of it at the dockyard and naval base, hence the presence of Flag Officer Plymouth, Vice Admiral Sir Roy Newman, who performed the naming ceremony at Plymouth Railway Station.

Later Admiral Newman and other guests boarded the high-speed Intercity train for a Pullman-style breakfast on a trip to Exeter.





ARROW MAKES HER LAST BOW

FLYING her paying off pennant, HMS Arrow comes into Plymouth Sound for the last time.

Launched in 1974 the Type 21 frigate, a veteran of the Falklands campaign, is to join her sisters HMS Amazon and Ambuscade in the Pakistan Navy.

In recent years the Arrow has been at the forefront of the battle against the Columbian drugs barons, operating with the US Coast Guard during West Indies Guard Ship deployment.

She was early into action in the South Atlantic in 1982. When she was attacked by Mirage fighters AB Ian Britnell was wounded, becoming the conflict's first casualty.

And when HMS Sheffield was hit by an Exocet, the Arrow put herself alongside to rescue 220 of the stricken destroyer's people after hours of firefighting.

She later provided covering fire for the capture of Darwin and Goose Green and naval gunfire support during the battle for Port Stanley.

FRONT LINE FIRST

● From front page

drop in inflation.

Several hundred million pounds are likely to come into the coffers with the formation of a housing trust to manage Service married quarters — as reported in Navy News' October issue.

But a major new defence costs study, "Front Line First", has now been set in hand to achieve the bulk of the savings needed, and will look into further areas, including procurement practice, headquarters and manpower costs.

Ships taken up from trade in the Falklands and Gulf wars have been cited as examples of assets that are useful in time of war but need not form part of the general force structure.

It is proposed to look at other areas where such an arrangement might be made — the United States, for example, relies on contracts with civil airlines and the use of reserves to meet much of its need for tactical and strategic airlift.

And while private industry relies more and more on leasing for its transport, the Armed Forces might do likewise.

Pressure

Bearing in mind the criticism of the House of Commons Defence Committee of the numbers of senior appointments, the question is also being asked whether best use is made of the skills, experience and ideas of more junior officers.

Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said he would be closely monitoring the effect of operational commitments on the Royal Navy — "and if I judge that action is necessary to ease the pressure I shall take it."

"I have no intention of asking our Servicemen and women to undertake difficult and hazardous operations without the necessary equipment, support and training."

Mr Rifkind concluded his statement to the committee on an upbeat note — he confirmed that tenders were being invited from UK yards for a further batch of Sandown-class single-role minehunters.

Cash steer from Naafi

ADVICE on financial planning — particularly useful to Service leavers — is being offered by an expanding network of Financial Centres operated by Naafi at about a dozen Service establishments throughout UK.

Latest of the centres is at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth where the official opening was conducted by the executive officer of the establishment, Cdr Brian Wheeler, at the end of November.

First of the centres was opened in 1990 and besides Nelson, they are operating at HMS Drake and RN air station Culdrose.

● See our new regular 'Going Outside' feature on page 14.



'Wish they all could be Carolina girls ...'

OPENING a welcome break for HMS Argyll as she arrived at Wilmington, North Carolina were the Kit Cats — cheerleaders from New Hanover High School.

Looking suitably overwhelmed by their reception are LWEM Steve Smith and WEM Kai Blackett.

The girls, accompanied by their school band, met the Type 23 frigate as she came alongside.

Later, the ship's Meteorology Officer Lt Cdr Bruce Robinson gave a lecture on oceanography which was transmitted live to a number of local schools. Steve and Kai knew who they'd rather watch ...

The Argyll returned to Devonport last month after a short two-month deployment to the Western Atlantic, having taken part in a busy trials programme at the Acoustic Underwater Test and Evaluation Centre (AUTC) near Andros Island in the

Bahamas.

The around-the-clock programme which also involved HM submarines Trenchant and Upholder, included tactical development and acceptance trials for new Type 23 and submarine sonar and torpedo systems.

HMS Argyll conducted a number of torpedo firings and

was herself the target for some of the submarine series.

Inset: HMS Trenchant's attack team during the first ever Spearfish heavyweight torpedo certification by a British submarine. She was also the first to fire the latest Block 1C variant of the Royal Naval Sub-Harpoon missile.



"It won't go over my tail feathers!"

MESSAGE FOR THE COMMUNICATORS

HAVING completed two and a half years as Communications Drafting Officer I can now share with you my observations on the present drafting scene and the way ahead for the Comms Section (writes Lt Cdr Robert Villier).

Cross training: The last LRO(G) qualifying course ends in March with the last LRO(T) having finished in December. The new LRO cross-trained qualifying courses begin this month and we will be drafting in accordance with basic-date seniority and availability.

RS/CY "Qs" will continue until the end of 1996, but to help CROs who have passed their PPE early notification has been given of when they are likely to be drafted into HMS Collingwood for course.

Comms Wrens volunteers to sea: The final tranche for sea-going volunteers produced 22 candidates divided into two sea conversion courses at Collingwood starting in April and August.

LACWRS Lesley Greening joins HMS Manchester as the ship's RS next month — the first POWRS drafted to sea in charge of a sub-department.

Advancement rosters: Comms Branch requirement (billets to be filled) is now broadly matched by Branch bearing (people available) which is about 2,300. This is a dramatic reversal from the shortages of a couple of years ago and has been brought about by Options for Change, LTC manpower saving and reduction in the PVR rate caused by recession.

As a result of manpower cuts, gaps and underbearings which resulted in short roster waiting times have ended abruptly causing longer rosters for the foreseeable future. This should not

diminish the incentive for advancement and promotion.

CY/RS to CCY/CRS: November's promotion signal produced ten RSs and three for promotion — a reasonable number in which to generate further drafts. Closure of some RNR units will also provide additional CCY/CRSs for drafting.

LFS billets: Local Foreign Service billets are comparatively few and so are in demand. Someone has to go so why not you? Ensure your DPC reflects a "yes" preference with your first and second preferences.



Drafty

A demanding new year



Turbulence in wake of redundancies



"I've been recommended for small ships!"

WITH the forthcoming move of the Second Sea Lord and his team into Portsmouth Naval Base, and restructuring of HMS Centurion, 1994 is likely to be another demanding year. It is therefore time to reflect on where we stand on the most important factor — YOU.

In Drafting Division we are only too aware of the increasing demands on us to provide the most cost-effective and professional service.

Captain Naval Drafting and his team know how important

drafting is to you, so within the limits of the rules and what is possible and desirable, we endeavour to be helpful, fair and balanced.

The latest round of redundancies caused considerable turbulence — not only for those who had been selected but for many others — so that those who are redundant could be relieved in time to complete resettlement and terminal leave by the end of November.

That may have a short-term effect on sea-shore ratios within branches and sub-branches and will also have an impact on first preferences.

On average ten per cent are in non-preference drafts. We will however study your preferences, personal circumstances and career plans and balance

your needs with those of the Service.

An important part of the DPC is the small ships recommendation. There are a number of ratings serving in small ships who are unsuited to do so or have problems that need management within a larger organisation. This situation is mainly due to inaccurate divisional work.

If you have a mature outlook, enjoy working unsupervised in a small, close-knit community, then life in small ships could suit you. But if you have financial, disciplinary or welfare problems, or suffer from sea sickness then small ships are probably not for you. Have a word with your divisional officer — we have billets available.

Cross-trained volunteers

FIRST of the cross-trained Warfare Branch volunteers have now completed their course and have joined, or are shortly to join, their ships as OM(C)1s — for 27 months complete with task books and a steep learning curve.

Those awaiting cross-training courses should read DCI 161/93 which gives useful information on badges and advancement, etc.

New address for Centurion

ON January 5 the appointment of Commodore HMS Centurion was due to come to an end, and on March 31 the establishment will decommission. From January 5 mail to the Drafting Division must be addressed to: Captain Naval Drafting, HMS Centurion, Grange Road, Gosport, Hants PO13 9XA.

From April 1 the address will be: Captain Naval Drafting, 2SL/CNH Centurion Buildings, Grange Road, Gosport, Hants PO13 9XA.

New tasks for the Regies



"Out of my chair, RPO!"

FOR the past two years strict limitations have been placed upon numbers of ratings permitted to transfer to the Regulating Branch. Now the restrictions are lifted and during 1994 as many as 72 volunteers will be required.

Transfer of Regulators from administrative tasks in UPOs to that of security management heralds the start of new tasking for branch members. Career development will now involve more responsibility in whole-

ship management as well as the traditional role of regulating the ship's company and advising the Command.

Increased responsibilities is reflected in the recent change from 5:5 to 3:3 in the NAMET requirement for transfer.

Volunteers should seek further information from their Regulating staff, while details about the qualification for transfer can be found in Advancement Regulations, Chapter 16.

Navy News

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SEND FOR FREE LIST

Help us to help you

DRAFTY has no access to your Service documents. The DPC contains the only information on your preferences and personal circumstances which is available to drafting desks.

If any of your details change, a new DPC should be forwarded. Your divisional officer and head of department should ensure that all relevant facts are inserted — such as employment, equipment experience, detailed information on preferences, and comments.

The DPC enables us to place you, when possible, in a job to the advantage of yourself and the Service. You should review your DPC annually and if you are in any doubt as to its accu-

racy, submit a new one. Some senior rates are the worst offenders in letting DPC information lapse.

While C230 is the basic skeleton on which we work, you can provide extra "flesh" by submitting a C240 which indicates your wish to be considered for a particular course, draft or extension/reduction of current draft. That is how you put requests to the drafting desk — requests which we are bound to answer.

CONTACTS

TELEPHONE extensions for the Operations Branch drafting team are:

Ops Drafting Commander and WO Appointing (Cdr Ted Sykes) 2494.

Office manager and Regulators drafting (CPOWTR Brian Beris) 2497.

SJ/MW/D drafting officer (Lt Cdr Mike Linfield) 2453.

SJ/MW/D drafting desk (POWTR Pam Miles) 2441.

MJ/EW/SEA drafting officer (Lt Cdr George Bent) 2454.

MJ/EW/SEA drafting desk (POWTR Penny Diamond) 2284.

RO/CT/TEL drafting officer (Lt Cdr Bob Villier) 2452.

RO/CT/TEL drafting desk (POWTR Dell King) 2496.

R/SR/WA drafting officer (Lt Cdr Peter Young) 2457.

R/SR/WA drafting desk (POWTR Sue Walters) 2450.

PT and Regulating Drafting has moved to the Fleet Air Arm desk.

New contact numbers are ext. 2049 for Lt Cdr Roger Grove and ext 2969 for POWTR Sue Buoy.



Frigate of many nations

A ROYAL Canadian Navy frigate commissioned in April 1944 also bore the name Orkney. She was involved in anti-submarine patrols in the Atlantic and North Sea during the next 12 months and earned a battle honour.

Earmarked for scrap in 1947 and sold to a New York company, she enjoyed a reprieve and operated in a mercantile role until 1950. She was then bought by Israel and renamed the Mivtakh. Two years later she was passed on to the Ceylon Navy, in which she served as the Mahasena until 1967.

Committed to the cause of conservation

EMPLOYED by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in "southern waters" and by the Scottish Fisheries Protection Agency in the north, the Fishery Protection Squadron:

Enforces European Community regulations and national fisheries legislation.

Enforces international regulations relevant to fishing vessels and other craft.

Prevents fishery incidents, illegal or ill-mannered.

Investigates and if necessary adjudicates disputes between fishermen at sea.

Assists distressed fishing vessels.

Locates and identifies foreign fishing vessels within British Fishing Limits.

Obtains detailed statistical information about fishery matters during boardings.

Provides, when specifically requested by MAFF, a platform for authorised members of Sea Fisheries Committees to enforce their own by-laws.

The overall task in time of peace is:

To carry out Fishery Protection patrols within the 6-mile, 12-mile and 200-mile Fishery Limits.

To patrol and protect oil and gas installations in the UK's Economic Zone. (Royal Marine detachments may be embarked).

To conduct surface surveillance and identification of units of interest.

To report on pollution and clear small oil spills.

To perform search and rescue operations.

To "Show the Flag" and carry out port visits.

And in time of war:

To perform Naval Control of Shipping duties.

To defend ports and anchorages.

To support mine countermeasures vessels.

To carry out anti-submarine warfare minefield patrols.

To support coastal convoys.

ORKNEY GUARDS OUR FERTILE FISHERIES



ONE of seven purpose-built Offshore Patrol Vessels of the Island class, HMS Orkney has steamed over half-a-million miles (508,543) since first commissioning in 1977, and during that period has actually been underway for over 53,000 hours.

The waters around our offshore oil and gas installations and the fishing limits of the United Kingdom are patrolled by ships of the Fishery Protection Squadron's Offshore Division.

The Squadron can justifiably claim to be the oldest in the Royal Navy: as early as 1379, Yarmouth established its own armed fishery protection vessels.

But the Offshore Division did not come into existence until 1975, when it comprised HM ships Jura and Reward, subsequently replaced by the Island-class vessels.

Like her sister ships, HMS Orkney was built at Hall Russell Shipyard in Aberdeen. Her military and civilian communications capabilities are comprehensive, allowing her to carry out her fishery protection duties and also to act as a command or information centre for any major offshore incident.

The Orkney is fitted with a Computer Assisted Navigation system to facilitate speedy, accurate, up-to-the-minute position fixing, using Decca and LORAN C in the more northerly parts of the patrol areas.

Accommodation on board the Orkney is of a high standard. The junior ratings live in four-berth cabins and the senior ratings in two-berth cabins. Should extra personnel be required to be carried — for example, a Royal Marines Commando unit — there are emergency bunks in each of the cabins. The ratings have a cafeteria messing system in a large dining hall adjacent to the modern and spacious galley.

There are large cold store and provision rooms capable of holding sufficient supplies for patrols in excess of five weeks away from the base port, Rosyth.

Since June 1993, HMS Orkney has been on patrol around the UK, from waters north of the Shetland Isles to the fishing grounds 150 miles southwest of Land's End.

From June 6 to November 20, members of her ship's company completed 258 boardings, sighted 839 fishing vessels and detected 32 infringements/fishing offences. Several court cases are outstanding.

Further back, in April, the Orkney, with Royal Marines embarked, resolved a fishing dispute with the French in the Channel Islands. In January she was standby ship to help with pollution control for the Braer oil disaster in the Shetland Islands. And back in October 1992 she was escort ship for HMS Vanguard as the Trident submarine came out of build and sailed for the first time from Barrow-in-Furness.

The work schedule — a 10 day patrol followed by 48 hours alongside — can be tiring. This is, however, balanced by the knowledge that by patrolling the areas around the United Kingdom, the ship helps to ensure that those fishing there can do so fairly and safely and that fish stocks will be maintained.

But it is not all work and no play for the Orkney. Although foreign visits are not as frequent as they were, there are a large number of excellent UK "runs ashore" to be had in the ports frequented by, and very familiar to, those in the Fishery Protection Squadron.

During October the whole ship's company of the Orkney went to Rothiemurchus Lodge near Aviemore for activities during the ship's commanding officer's week. These included golf, fishing (!), mountain biking, walking, clay pigeon shooting and off-road driving.



Pennant No: P299. Commissioned: 25 February 1977. Displacement: 925 tons (standard); 1,260 (full load). Length: 195 feet six inches. Beam: 34ft. Draught: 16ft 9in. Main machinery: 2 Rushton diesel engines, providing up to 4,200hp, driving a single screw, variable pitch propeller. Speed: 16.5 knots max. Range: 7,000 miles at 12 knots. Armament: 1 Bofors 40/60 Mark 3; effective range, one mile. Countermeasures: Polaris direction-finding VHF. Data system: Racal CANE DEA. Radars: Kelvin Hughes Type 1006 1 Band. Boats: 2 Avon Searider Rigid Inflatables with 75hp engines, capable of 35-40 knots. Operational: Under Operational Control (OPCON) of Captain Fishery Protection on FP duties for MAFF/SFPA. Ship's company: 36 — 5 officers, 7 senior rates and 24 junior rates.

POSTCARDS of Ships of the Royal Navy are obtainable at 65p each (minimum order £1.95) from Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. An order for 12 cards is priced at £7 and a standing order for the supply of each of 12 cards on publication can be arranged on receipt of £10.50/foreign £12. Prices include postage and packing, and postcards will be despatched on receipt of stamps, postal order or cheque. No postcards are stocked of ships which paid off before 1956.

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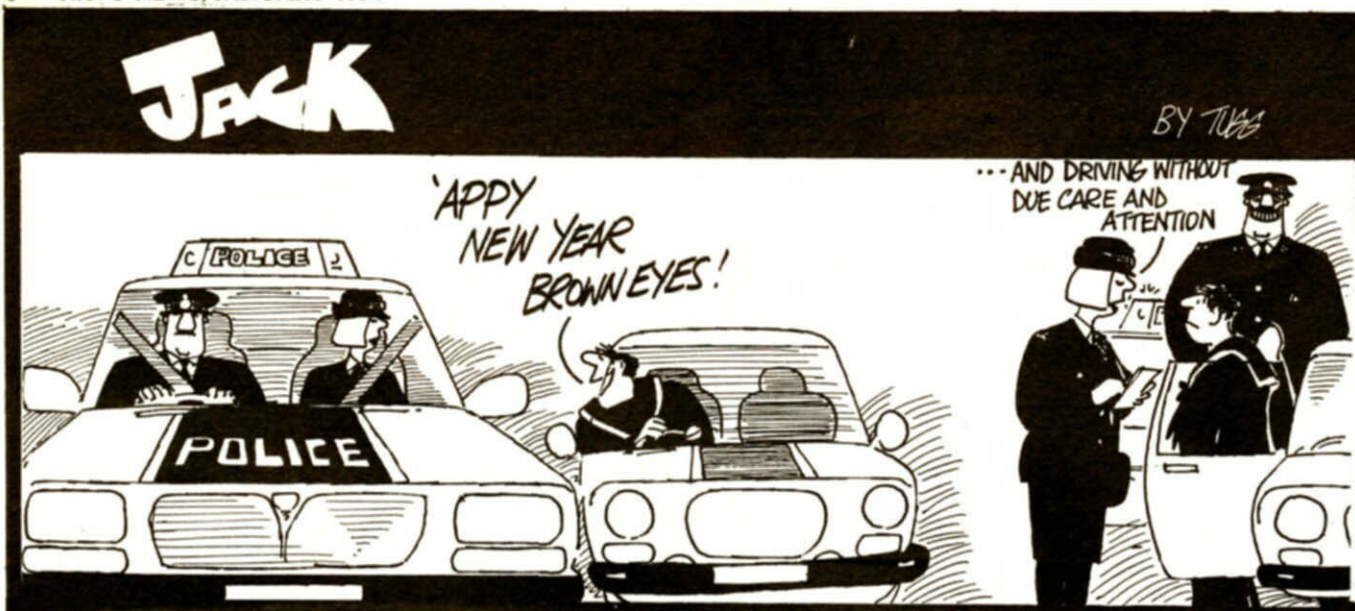
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Letters



Shortsighted attitude to myopia

UNABLE to join the Navy as a Seaman Officer because of poor eyesight — despite four years' watchkeeping experience in the RNR — I joined as an Instructor Officer, hoping to have a full and operational career including sea time.

Since then, despite short 'support service' attachments to sea I have singularly failed to find the operational roles and excitement

for which I thought I had joined — because my eyesight is, when uncorrected, just below the standard required of a Seaman Officer.

In discussion with fellow officers of all specialisations I find a number of anomalies. My immediate superior, a Commander(X(P)), tells me

that when he joined the RN was so short of Seaman Officers

that the eyesight requirements were waived — and he was subsequently selected as aircrew, despite having sub-standard eyesight.

I then went along to an Army recruiting office, explained that I wore contact lenses and asked if I could apply for an Infantry requirement. Not only was that possible, but I could also apply for the Army Air Corps, even the Parachute Regiment.

I hear a rumour now that even our own Royal Marines have lowered the eyesight requirements.

It would seem likely that my branch is to change its entire structure as a result of OSG. I know many officers in the branch will want closer involvement in the warfare, rather than in the support side of the future Royal Navy.

It seems a little unfair, however, that an officer may be denied that chance on the grounds of eyesight, when patently in other services — and indeed notably in the US Navy — that is not the case.

Surely, with the dissatisfaction many Seamen feel about prolonged sea time and the dissatisfaction I and many of my colleagues feel about too little of the same, can we not remove these outdated requirements and start sending good — and above all else keen — officers to complement jobs at sea regardless of their uncorrected eyesight standards and give those present incumbents a better sea-shore ratio? — Lieutenant, RN, HMS Raleigh.

Who says we're not a true Ton?

I WAS MOST dismayed to read about the end of the Ton class in November's Navy News. For some unknown reason HMS Wilton appears to be treated as a leper in comparison to her sister ships and, in your words, "not a true Ton."

I find this extremely disappointing when we consider that we ARE a real Ton — and will be the ONLY Ton remaining in RN service in 1994.

The only difference between HMS Wilton and her sister ships is that we have a GRP hull and our sisters are wooden. The fittings throughout are often identical, as is the compartment layout. During her build an older sister was cannibalised to provide most of our machinery.

To fulfil our current role as the Dartmouth Navigation Training Ship our mine-sweeping gear has been removed to make way for a purpose-built navigation cabin and a store was also converted into an additional mess deck for female personnel. Our MCM gear is present stored in Portsmouth, ready to be refitted at short notice should we be required for our war role.

For the last couple of years HMS Wilton has enjoyed taking every young officer who joins the Royal Navy — and former WRNS — to sea for what for the majority of them is their initial sea experience and

first few days in a Royal Navy warship.

I am sure that they have noticed that we are a real Ton, as have all those who have served in HMS Wilton over the past 20 years. — Lt. I. K. Adam, RN, commanding officer HMS Wilton.

Sorry, Wilton — no offence intended. Everything you say is true — except perhaps your claim to be a 'real Ton.' Jane's Fighting Ships has always listed you as a class on your own, noting that you are "similar to the Ton class and fitted with re-conditioned machinery and equipment from the scrapped Derriton." As the world's first GRP warship, you might have revelled in your uniqueness, so your loyalty to your distinguished forebears is to be commended! — Ed.

I SHOULD like to add a brief note to your excellent valedictory for the Ton class (November issue). They were designed by W. J. 'Bill' Holt, RCNC, who had been in charge of RN small craft since the late thirties.

He was a dedicated yachtsman and put his experience into his designs for such varied craft as the Fairmile B, the IIDML, the form of the Camper and Nicholson MGBs as well as the 105 and 126ft MMS.

He even spent a Christmas leave during the war going to Iceland in a Fairmile B.

The Tons were derived from the 126 footers but with a glance at the fine US designed BYMS. They were good sea boats, but size for size the 'Hams' were generally thought better.

There is one important error — the magnetic mine was not introduced in 1939 but in 1918, when large numbers were laid by the RN off the Belgian coast, and in 1919, off St Petersburg. — D. K. Brown, RCNC, Bath.

I WAS interested in your article about the Ton class, having worked on or been involved with a large number over the years.

You state that they were all originally named after villages ending T-O-N, this being one of the commonest endings for English place names.

You may be interested to know that Kirkliston, Gavinton, Belton, Maxton and Lewiston were among the Tons also named after Scottish place names. — J. Jarvie, HM Naval Base, Rosyth.

● Below: HMS Wilton

Bringing back the Barracuda

READING a few horror stories about the Barracuda in your pages lately reminded me of the time I spent at HMS Condor, Arbroath with the prototype aircraft in 1942. The picture shows me as the engine fitter during trials — with the aircraft piloted by Lt. Henry Ellis.

Ellis had earlier been awarded the DFC and received it from King George VI — but was subsequently told to take it down as it was not an Admiralty award.

He told me that when he went back to the Palace to receive his DSC the King noticed the DFC was missing and asked why. When he was told he retorted "I gave you that medal — you wear it!" Ellis was killed the following year.

— G. E. Faville, Gloucester. 'NO love for Barracudas' (October issue) revived memories of when I was an



Air Mechanic 'L' stationed on an Air Repair Yard HMS Ukussa at Katukurunda, Ceylon in 1944-45.

When the Barracudas arrived all hell broke loose,

with planes crashing into the paddy at the beginning of the runway and away from the airfield in the flooded fields. A guard had to be placed on these wrecks at night, until such time as the flow subsided and then the duty elephant worked overtime dragging them out and dumping them outside the hangars so they could be stripped for spares.

At the time, we understood the crashes were all due to inexperienced pilots and faulty seals in the oleo legs, but articles I have since read have indicated otherwise.

I have never seen a Barracuda since the war — there are no specimens in any aerospace museums to the best of my knowledge, but if anyone can prove me wrong on that subject I would be interested to know. — N. S. Nevard, Bromley, Kent.

Seeing red over green

WITH reference to DCI- (Gen) 215/93 (October issue) — what bright spark decided to authorise green distinctive cloth for DGST(N) personnel embarked in RFAs?

Initially this was worn by the Electrical Branch and by Special Branch Reservists. Surely white would have been more appropriate — green is still worn by Merchant Navy personnel to denote Electrical and Radio officers while white is worn by Pursers? — Lt Cdr T. J. Stevens, RNR (retd), Wickham, Hants.

LETTERS to the Editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.



No. 474 40th year

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WREN PLAYS A PART ON VETERANS DAY

LWREN Tracy Low (CWTA) raises the Union flag as the Naval Party 1011 representative at a US Veterans Day parade at the Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Centre range on Andros Island, Bahamas.

The parade took place during Operation Marsh Wolf — the autumn series of UK trials on the AUTEK range — and was attended by representatives of the Royal Navy, the United States Army, Navy and Marine Corps and the Bahamian Police, as well as the American League veterans.

Down to business



SEVENTEEN years in the sport have seen Lt Cdr Phil Gibbs climb — or should that be fall? — to become the Royal Navy's first Advanced Parachute Instructor.

Phil, who works in the Tactical

Procedures Group at HMS Dryad, has been an Instructor to the RN and RM, and Army Parachute Associations for seven years. He runs one of the Navy's public display teams and is an accomplished free-fall cameraman (see picture). He has completed more than 1,600 descents.

MATRON'S FAREWELL ROUNDS



WHAT a carry on . . . Chief Nursing Officer Isa Gauld OARNNS is ceremonially towed out of the Royal Naval Hospital Gibraltar on the first leg of her journey to RNH Haslar.

As a result of reorganisation, there will no longer be a Matron at RNH Gibraltar and Isa will go down on the honours board as the last in the post. She has now taken over as Deputy Matron at Haslar.

Institute praises engineer's work

AS THE best student on a marine engineering application course at the Royal Naval Engineering College Manadon, Lt Adrian Sansford has been awarded the Institute of Marine Engineers' Silver Jubilee Medal.

Adrian won it for his excellent work on the ME Submarine Application Course.

He joined the Royal Navy in 1985 as an Artificer Apprentice and was selected for officer training three years later. In 1991 he graduated from Manadon with an engineering degree.

After continuing his submarine training at HMS Sultan, Adrian joined Fleet submarine HMS Sceptre in December as a trainee Marine Engineering Officer.

The IMarE Silver Jubilee Award, comprising a cheque and medal, was presented to Adrian by Sir Robert Hill, Vice President of the Institute of Marine Engineers, during Captain's Divisions at Manadon.



Lt Adrian Sansford.

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Batch 3 take a beating

Back last month after a six-month Persian Gulf tour on the Armilla Patrol was HMS Cornwall — seen here leading the destroyers FS La Motte-Picquet (foreground) and USS Nicholson during Gulf Ex 21.

All serene in this picture — but before long the weather took a turn for the worse and the ships were battered with gale force winds in very rough seas.

By this time they had been joined by Cornwall's relief, HMS Campbelltown, marking the first occasion on which two Batch 3 Type 22 frigates have operated in the Gulf together.

During her time in these waters Cornwall has also had the chance to exercise with units of the navies of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, while upholding UN sanctions by boarding vessels exiting the Shatt al Arab in the northern Arabian Gulf.

Soccer success

She visited Singapore and Penang, exercising with Australian, New Zealand, Malaysian and Singapore naval units contributing to the Five Power Defence Agreement, travelled back to the Gulf via Colombo, Ceylon — where the ship's soccer team beat a local team at the national stadium — and formed the RN's centre piece at the Dubai International Airshow when the Lynx helicopter showed off its capabilities.

On the way home through the Red Sea the ship's company raised money for the handicapped children's Pilgrim Trust by running a hundred miles around the upper deck (eleven circuits = one mile). The ship has herself steamed 45,000 miles since she left UK waters last June.



'Don't gulp, now'

It is rare for a little Offshore Patrol Vessel like HMS Guernsey to take nourishment from a Fleet Tanker the size of RFA Olna — and a Sea King helicopter from RN air station Portland was at hand to record the occasion.

The OPV was en route to her affiliated island of Guernsey for her first visit in over a year, having been kept busy on fishery protection duties in the North Sea.

She enjoyed a three-day break at St Peter Port before moving on to fresh Fisheries duties in the South West approaches — and then south to Gibraltar for a well-deserved maintenance period.

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RARE ENCOUNTER FOR WIGS SHIP DURING HAITI EMBARGO OPS

Argentine greetings to Active

WEST Indies Guardship HMS Active exchanged greetings with an Argentine warship during the enforcement of United Nations sanctions against the undemocratic regime which seized power in Haiti.

While sailing in company with the Argentine Navy corvette Granville, the Active's commanding officer, Capt. Chris Beagley, exchanged waves with his opposite number in the corvette.

Both ships are now allied in enforcing UN resolutions to prevent petrol, arms and ammunition from reaching the Haitian dictatorship.

When UN embargo operations began at the end of October, HMS Active and her support tanker RFA Oakleaf were both well placed to join at short notice the substantial UN naval force.

Armed parties

Besides the British ship and the Argentine corvette, the multi-national force includes six ships of the US Navy, US Coast Guard cutters, and frigates from Canada, the Netherlands and France.

Active has been allocated a 500 square mile area of control to the south of Haiti where she interrogates all shipping in the vicinity and puts armed boarding parties in ships bound for Haitian ports.

Ships intercepted in this way are inspected for contraband and allowed to continue if they are not contravening UN resolutions.

Sticky task

Cargo inspection in the high temperatures of the Caribbean is often a dirty, sweaty and sticky task for the boarding parties as they labour through the holds of sometimes battered and rusty old merchant ships.

In the case of mv Medina Star, the boarding party's job proved very sticky indeed — as they found themselves amid 2,500 tons of brown sugar. Although bound for Haiti's capital Port au Prince, the ship was allowed to continue as food



is not proscribed by UN resolutions.

Leader of the boarding party, Lt. Dickie Eaton, recalled that the Medina Star's complement was in itself akin to a UN assembly — the Master was Greek, the chief engineer Austrian, the cook was from Trinidad and the crew was made up of Ukrainians and Bulgarians.

In addition to her commitment to the UN, Active also has time to support US drug interdiction operations, and — as reported in last month's Navy News — recovered £80 million worth of cocaine from the sea.

While in the area the Type 21 frigate was present for the celebrations to mark the 15th anniversary of Dominican independence during which the island's president and prime minister were hosted on board.

A ceremonial guard from the ship led the Independence Day parade through Roseau, the capital town of the former Crown colony.

Her later visits included the island of St Lucia and, for Christmas, Tampa in Florida. Oakleaf spent the festive season at Port Canaveral.

HMS Active is due to return to UK in February.



ABOVE: HMS Active peels away from the Argentine corvette Granville after the ships' brief encounter.

LEFT: AN increasingly rare sight in today's Royal Navy — the firing of a Seacat surface-to-air missile.

BELOW: Active's busy round still includes highly important drug interdiction operations. This picture taken on board demonstrates the close co-operation between the Royal Navy and Caribbean and US authorities. Lt. Steve Holt, Active's navigating officer, discusses anti-drugs surveillance with Supt. Ivor Blake (left) of the St Kitts Marine Police, and Lt. Mark Lenox (right) of the US Coast Guard.



PICTURES: PAUL PARRACK

Seahorse has reason to be proud

RECOGNITION of the conduct of a Royal Navy party during a grounding incident came with the presentation to their executive officer of a Commendation by Flag Officer Surface Flotilla.

Lt. Ian Austin, executive officer of Naval Party 1016, received the commendation for his part in efforts to prevent the 5,000-ton container ship Norlandia grounding on a sandbank off Harwich on August 10.

NP 1016 is a seven-strong hydrographic unit based on the small chartered vessel mv Proud Seahorse which has a merchant crew of four. Her Master, Mr. Davey Reid, also received a FOSF Commendation from the Flag Officer's chief of Staff, Capt. Jeremy de Halpert.

Despite valiant efforts, the Norlandia did go aground, but was refloated on high tide the next day.



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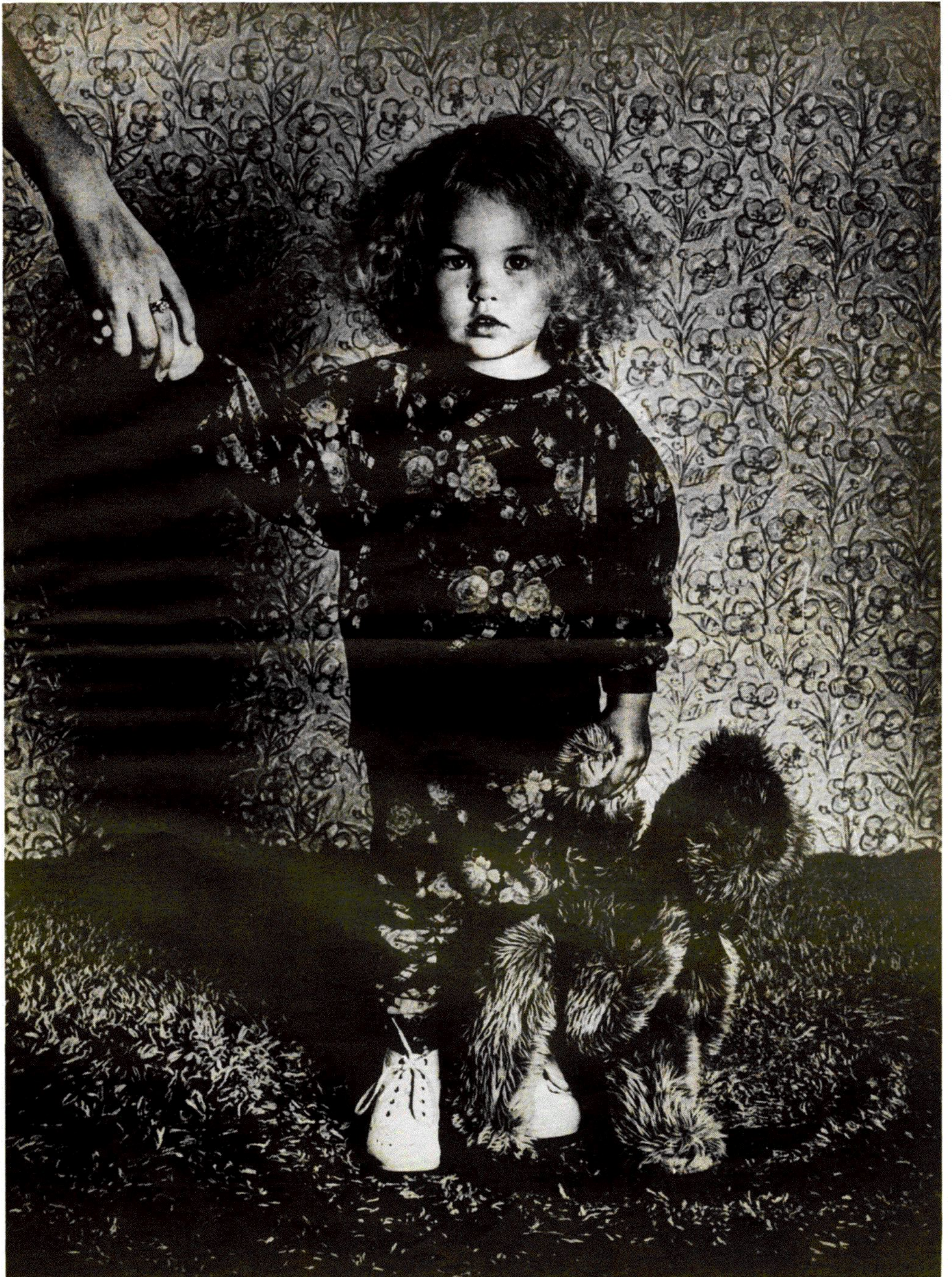
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Slim chance for Coventry cook

Shining lights in Peru

WHEN CK Andy Hemworth, from HMS Coventry, went on a diet during the ship's last deployment he managed to pile on the pounds — £380 pounds to be exact, the money raised through a sponsored slim!

Being a chef, losing weight wasn't the easiest way to raise money but with a lot of will-power and determination he shed a magnificent 42 lbs.

Andy is an active member of the RN Handicapped Children's Pilgrimage Trust, helping to look after children on trips and visits, and so was pleased to hand over the bumper cheque for the HCPT Easter trip to Lourdes.

□ □ □

Senior Rates from HMS Dolphin took part in a sponsored cycle ride from Lands End to Gosport and raised £949 for the Child's Development and Family Centre situated in the grounds of RNH Haslar. The centre provides a number of services for children with special needs and disabilities and the money raised will go towards the £1,800 needed for a new specially-equipped minibus.

□ □ □

HMS Daedalus was the venue for a 24-hour snooker match between two teams of Senior

and Junior Rates. Potting for pounds they managed to raise £486.90 to allow children from Heathfields School, Fareham, enjoy a field trip to the Isle of Wight.

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To mark the 329th birthday of the Royal Marine Corps, FOSNI RM Band carried out the long-standing tradition of donating their cake to patients at Lynebank Hospital.

□ □ □

Lts Jim Ellis and Tony Sodhi, of HMS Collingwood, flew through the air with the greatest of ease when they took part in a sponsored bungee-jump at Port Solent, Portsmouth. The jump raised £250 for Tenovus, a branch of cancer research.

Class LR393, also from HMS Collingwood, raised over £400 for The Red Cross by taking part in a cycle ride from Brighton's Grand Hotel to the Fareham naval establishment.

□ □ □

A police charity concert held in St Nicholas Church, HMS



A TEAM of walkers from HMS Sultan completed the ascent of all 14 peaks above 3,000 ft in Snowdonia National Park and covered the distance in less than 30 hours, under testing weather conditions. The team also managed to raise £1,400 to buy an oxygen regulator for the neo-natal unit at St Mary's Hospital, Portsmouth.

Drake, raised money for the Mount Wise Children's Trust, an educational charity set up by a group of residents to benefit local children and young people.

□ □ □

A team of runners from HMS Raleigh ran a marathon across Dartmoor in atrocious conditions and raised £300 for the Plymouth and District Cardiology Unit. In addition to money collected at Raleigh generous donations were also received from The Wheelers Inn, Torpoint and the city centre Midland Bank, Plymouth.

□ □ □

A Portsmouth centre for the disabled was looking better for a coat of paint thanks to a group of officers from HMS Dryad, X8 course, undergoing a final 16 weeks' training prior to sea service, decorated the Frank Sorrell Handicapped Day Care Centre at Eastney as their chosen charitable activity before leaving Dryad. The course spent two evenings painting the hall at the centre in Prince Albert Road, Eastney. Wielding their brushes were Sub Lts Alex Forbes, Jaquie Sherriff, James Robertson, Dave Knight and Andy Jordan along with Lts Colin Williams and John Greenacre.

□ □ □

Children staying in the Rainbow Ward, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, got a big surprise when Santa — alias Lt Cdr Charlie Wilson, C.O. of HMS Inverness — dropped in from the roof bearing gifts. The ward has been adopted by the Rosyth-based minehunter and

and Distress (KIND), the ship's charity in Liverpool, and the Sharjah Humanitarian Services, raised £800 with a further £1,300 collected from businesses and companies in Sharjah.

□ □ □

Alexandra House, the Royal United Services short stay residence for Service children, has completed a successful fund-raising initiative called Horses' Squares, where some £4,500 was raised.

□ □ □

HMS Brave has adopted the Ocean Youth Club and have generously committed themselves to helping Tony Whiting, skipper of the Lady Beaverbrook, with her forthcoming refit.

□ □ □

Two lucky winners of the RN Air Station Cudroose Air Day brochure colouring competition have received their prizes. Three-year-old Joe Roberts, from Falmouth, and eight-year-old Alexandra Bowman, from Camborne, met Cdr John Prichard and inspected a Gazelle helicopter at close quarters. Despite the worst Air Day weather in living memory, when nothing flew except the bungee jumpers, approximately £10,000 was raised for naval charities.

PAY DAY FOR CHARITIES

HMS Coventry displayed her enormous generosity during a visit to her namesake city. Aside from renewing old friendships her commanding officer, Capt. Christopher Stanford, distributed £2,500 to local charities.

The POs' Mess raised £650 for the Amanda Bevan Trust while The Association for Brain Damaged Children was presented with a cheque for £350. The money was raised by LS Waggy Wagstaffe who went on a sponsored slim. After losing 70 lbs his wife had to look twice when she met up with him in Mombasa!

Coventry Homes for the Mentally Handicapped, Coventry Cancer Support and Counden Care Centre also benefited from the ship's fund-raising receiving £900 between them.

Finally, a further £600 was given to the Lord Mayor, Cllr Alex Boyd, along with a cheque for £400 from Rover Apprentices, money which was raised during a sponsored run from Devonport to Coventry and which will help support the Strathclyde Handicapped Games.

Fearless record at fund-raising



CHILDREN from Woodlands Special School gave a warm welcome to CPOs Jeff Chitty, Keith Smeeth and Robbie Gould from HMS Fearless when they arrived to present a cheque for £1,500. A further cheque was handed over by Executive Officer Cdr Martin Butcher to the Hannah the Scanner Appeal run by Scarborough Hospital. The money was raised by the ship's company during her two-month deployment in the Mediterranean.

HERALD REMEMBERS WITH 'SIDEY PARTY'

SITUATED hundreds of miles from the nearest Poppy seller, due to surveying commitments in the north Atlantic, the ship's company of HMS Herald decided to raise money for the Poppy Appeal by holding a sponsored "sideys-growing" competition.

There were three different categories, "big and bushy", won by LA(METOC) Spud Murphy, "most original" won by WEM(R) Brian Laidlaw

and "worst effort" won by MEM(L) Robby MacDonald.

HMS Herald's commanding officer, Cdr. Iain Sewell, is pictured taking a close look at some of the entries — top, from left, SA Spider Kelly, CK Butch Butcher, WEM(R) Brian Laidlaw and CPO Kev Retallick; bottom, from left, L(SR) Dickie Barter, LA(METOC) Spud Murphy, WEM(O) Jo McGowan and AB George Mustard.





Leavers research project launched

NAVAL Resettlement Service backing is being given to a major study on how well Service people are making the transition to civilian employment.

The survey, being undertaken by the University of York's Centre for Defence Economics, comes after a year in which more than 1,500 planned redundancies have increased the number of Service leavers to 5,100.

Operating from the Resettlement Office at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, researchers will catalogue the employment experience of a large number of RN and RM officers and ratings for five years from when they leave.

Co-operation with the project is voluntary, but Resettlement Officer at Nelson, Cdr Clive Lewis, is confident that response to questionnaires will be sufficient to make the study viable.

"It's the first time that this kind of study has been done for the armed services, and I fully expect that the Army and RAF

He said the aim of the study was to assess resettlement advice and assistance and to re-

late it to the long-term employment experience of leavers. It would provide an invaluable aid to improving Resettlement Service help.

"Although the statistics show that most leavers have jobs to go to or find jobs fairly quickly, I am concerned about the ten per cent who are long-term unemployed," he said.

Lasting jobs

"Also, we want to know how long our leavers remain in employment — something the survey will discover."

All the information will be collected in confidence and will be collected and processed in such a way as to protect the



Resettlement Officer Cdr Clive Lewis deals with an unusual case: US Navy exchange officer Lt Cdr Agnes Maddox, and her British husband — former RN lieutenant Matthew Cox — seek advice on careers and courses. Mr Cox left the Navy in 1984 since when he has obtained a degree and worked in teaching. He is entitled to assistance as an ex-Serviceman while Agnes, who leaves the USN next summer, receives assistance on the basis of her exchange status.

Picture: LA(Phot) Richie Moss

confidentiality of individuals. The University of York is assuring participants that no information relating to individuals will be divulged.

Meanwhile, the Resettlement Office at Nelson is providing courses for spouses of Service personnel who are leaving the Navy. A course lasting two days — but split by an interval of about 14 days — is being offered from January 20.

Guest speakers will cover topics such as careers, housing and financial matters, and options for the family. Small, informal groups will be gathered for workshops, discussions, in-

formation and counselling.

Early booking is recommended for the courses which will run throughout the year. Contact The Resettlement Office, Rodney Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, Hants. tel. 0705 822351 ext. 24127.

Courses at Tidworth

COURSES for Service leavers are offered at The Royal British Legion Training Centre at Delhi Barrack, Tidworth, Wiltshire.

Current courses, the cost of which vary between £115 and £235 include computer operation (five days) for varying levels of computer literacy; book keeping and accounts (five days); and an eight-day block course on small business development.

Contact Christine Mathers on 0980 43674 or Tidworth Mil 2331.

Our news, your views

IN THE wake of job reductions in the Royal Navy under Options for Change, Navy News begins a regular feature on the subject of prime importance to thousands of Service and ex-Service people — going outside.

As well as presenting articles and reports designed to inform Service leavers, Navy News also wants to hear from you, our readers, on what concerns and experiences you have whether you are facing the prospect of resettlement or whether you have already started your new life as a civilian.

Write to the Editor. Our address appears in page 6.

RFEA helps 4,000 ratings

IN THE front line of resettlement work is the Regular Forces Employment Association which each year assists more than 10,000 ex-Service people and finds jobs for half of them.

A registered charity, the RFEA is part of Forces Resettlement and the Services Employment Network and was set up 108 years ago. Its aims are to help ex-Regulars of non-commissioned rank to settle in civilian life and to find them employment.

To register with the RFEA individuals should have served for more than three years and have a good character reference.

Free

The Association calculates that last year almost 4,000 ratings from the Royal Navy were eligible for its free assistance offered by 40 employment officers strategically placed throughout the UK, all of them ex-Regulars themselves.

They are prepared to advise and help over any major problems during the transition from Service to civilian life — problems which include housing and domestic difficulties and education matters.

In addition inquiries by letter or telephone are answered.

In the view of the Association those leaving the Services need to consider employment in relation to housing — and plan well ahead by contacting the RFEA during their last two years in the Navy.

Address of your nearest branch of the RFEA can be obtained through Unit Resettlement Officers, while the headquarters of the Association is at 25 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2LN, tel. 071-813-1280.

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'SERVICE SKILLS ARE UNMATCHED' — RIFKIND

MORE than three-quarters of Service leavers either have a civilian job to go to or find one within three months of their departure, according to a post-exit survey by the Tri-Service Resettlement Organisation and Services Employment Network.

Resettlement Director, Brigadier Gage Williams, said the survey showed that half of Service leavers had jobs to go to when they left. "Of the remainder more than half have found a job within three months, some have taken early retirement and quite a proportion are putting themselves through full-time education or retraining."

Brigadier Williams was speaking during a visit to the TSRO & SEN by the Defence Secretary Mr Malcolm Rifkind who was told how the SEN generates job offers for the 7,500 Service leavers registered with the Network — 1,300 of them from the Royal Navy.

Mr Rifkind said that the "breadth and depth of training, both in management and trade skills, which everybody in the Armed Services undergoes, is not matched by any other organisation in the UK."

The campaign has already tripled jobs offered to the Network during the past year.

In answer to the challenge presented by redundancies, the SEN widened the eligibility for registration from October, a move which will almost double the numbers entitled to SEN assistance.

Registration is now open to commissioned officers, all ranks who have completed five years service, and anyone leaving under medical discharge. Previously, registration was

restricted to officers and senior NCOs who had completed at least 12 years service.

Service people may register up to six months before they leave and may remain on the SEN database for up to a year after leaving. Once registered they will receive details of any jobs offered to the SEN that match their skills, experience and chosen career.

New registration cards are being issued as well as a new booklet "Services Employment Network — How to Register," available from Unit Resettlement Officers.

Signal offer by BR

SIXTY Service leavers are being sought by British Rail to take part in the major modernisation of their signalling network.

The search for Service leavers is a continuation of BR's "Forces for Change" programme created in 1992 to recruit former Service people for their engineering based Signalling Projects Group.

Devised by retired Army general Sir Anthony Mullens following a chance meeting with BR Chairman Sir Bob Reid, the programme has already resulted in 51 job offers to ex-Service people. Sixty more are now required.

Signalling Project offices are sited at Reading, Croydon, Birmingham, West Midlands, Glasgow and York.

BR employees dealing with RN leavers are Phil Thompson and Ivan Wheaton. They may be contacted through Marshall Tanous Corporate Communications Ltd tel. 071-632-5904.

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Invitation to take a running jump

If you fancy the idea of leaping off a mountain in Peru, the 1995 Joint Services expedition to climb the peak Huascarán is for you.

A high altitude hang glider launch and endurance flight is planned during the expedition to the Cordillera Blanca, provisionally planned for 4 January-10 March next year.

Other aims are to scale Huascarán and the surrounding peaks by a selection of straightforward and technical routes while carrying out physiological research upon members of the party into nutrition and intestinal function at altitude.

Novice and lead climbers are invited to apply and catering and base camp managers are also wanted. Applicants with specialist skills — medical, Spanish language, photography and signals — will get priority and hang-gliders will be identified by the Joint Services Hang Gliding Club.

A personal contribution of £600 will be required. Applications, to include full personal details, NOK, passport photo and relevant experience, to 2Lt A. J. Dinmore RM, JSE Huascarán 1995, Royal Marines Poole.

DCI JS 94/93

No bars to Oman gong

THE Queen has allowed that personnel who received the Glorious 20th National Day Medal from the Sultan of Oman may wear it with unrestricted permission.

To qualify, recipients had to be in the service of the Sultan on either loan or contract terms at the time of the celebration, 18 November 1990.

DCI Gen 259/93

Safety in print

THE Ship Safety Board established last year (see DCI Gen 125/93) has now set out the top level arrangements for managing the safety of MOD ships in peacetime.

This will be incorporated into JSP 430, the Ship Safety Handbook which is currently being prepared and any questions on ship safety policy should go to the Head of the Ship Safety Management Office at Foxhill, Bath.

DCI Gen 270/93

Warfare mixture

WARFARE Branch Junior Ratings began joining the Fleet last month as the new Warfare Department replaced the Operations Dept in HM ships and submarines.

Individual units will change to full Warfare branch schemes of complement at the Type Commander's discretion, at a suitable time in a ship's programme — for example, at the end of refit, but not before 75 per cent of Leading Hands borne of the old Operations and Weapon Engineering mechanic sub-branches have been replaced by Leading Operator Maintainers.

For some time, therefore, the proportion of Warfare Branch Ratings borne in HM ships will



"Hey...!"

increase well ahead of a 'Warfare Branch' scheme of complement being implemented in individual hulls.

Implementation across the Fleet will take some years, during which time there will be a mixture of 'implemented' and 'non-implemented' schemes of complement.

Announcement under DCI RN 258/93

Passport fees

FEES for passports have been revised and are now £18 for initial, renewal, second and replacement passports and £5 for child addition and other amendments.

Details of Payable Order Issuing Points are given while full details of procedures may be found under DCI CIV 85/92.

DCI Gen 284/93

Returns of Ulysses

THE Reserve Forces Ulysses Trust — established in 1992 to support a broad range of expeditions by volunteers of the Reserve Forces and Cadets — appeals for funds from Service units.

RFUT aims "to further the efficiency of the Reserve Forces... and to educate their personnel by undertaking expeditions for the purpose of carrying out research in geology, geophysics, glaciology meteorology, physiology, ornithology, botany, natural history and kindred sciences or for the promotion of interest in morale of and recruitment to the Reserve Forces."

Grants to top up minor expeditions which are unlikely to attract external sponsorship as well as "pump-priming" funds for major projects are made up to a maximum of one third of the total budget required, though bids in excess of £500 require the full approval of the Trustees.

Anyone wishing to make a donation should contact the Grants Secretary, RFUT, Directorate of Reserve Forces and Cadets, Rm 6/25, MOD Metropolitan Building, Northumberland Ave, London WC2N 5BL. Tel. 071 218 5080.

DCI Gen 273/93

AIM of this regular feature is to give a general impression of new Defence Council Instructions, some of which will affect conditions of service. In the event of action being taken the full original text should be studied.

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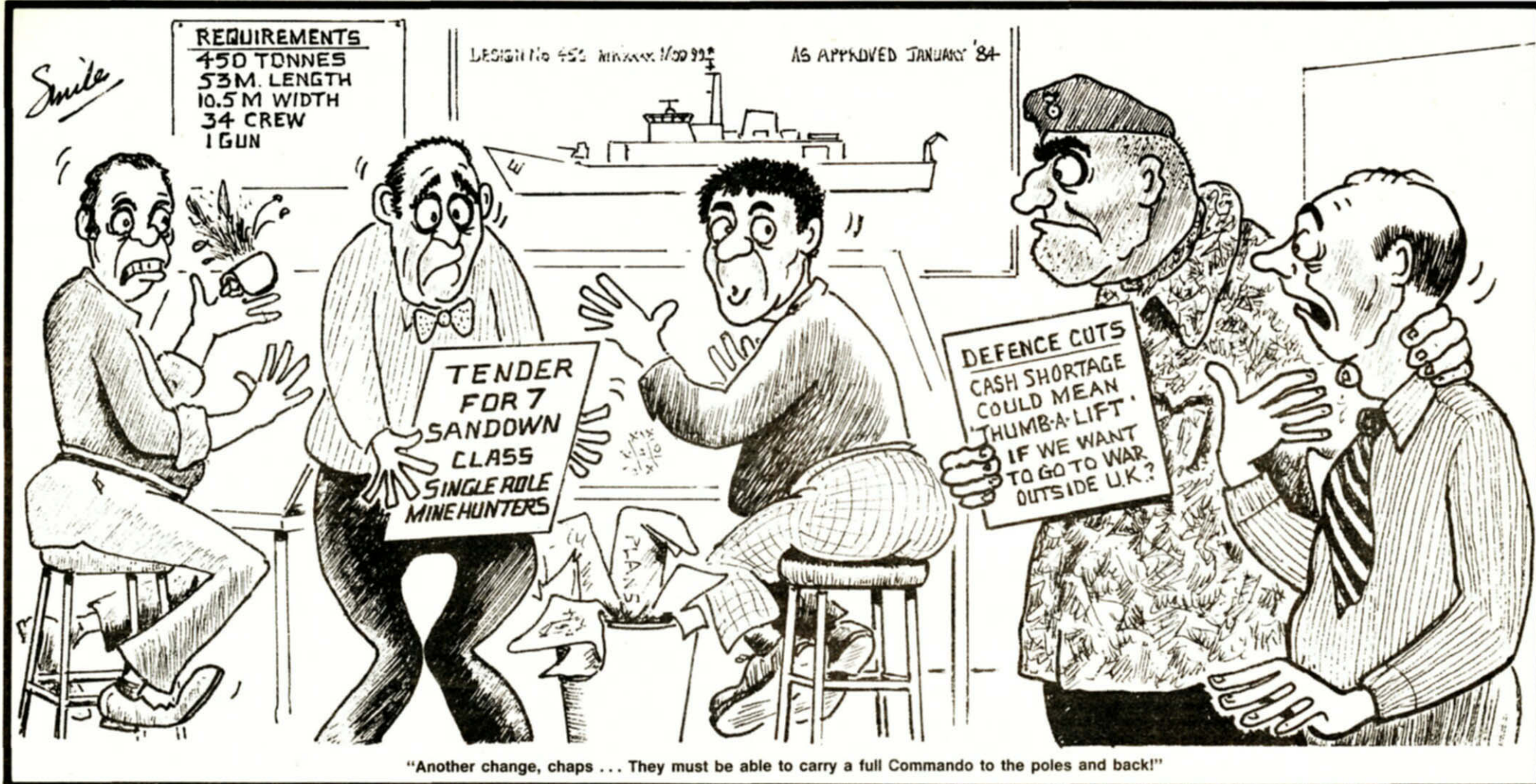
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NEWSVIEW

Cutting both ways

IN LAST month's issue we celebrated two major drug busts in which the Royal Navy took a leading role. Soon after, the Channel 4 documentary 'Cutting Edge' threw the spotlight on the RN's own internal disciplinary procedures — and we saw one of our own people get busted in turn.

Navy News has received a number of complaints, variously registering disquiet at the fact that drug abuse might actually occur within the Senior Service — or questioning the wisdom of the Navy's public relations staff in allowing such a programme to highlight an unpalatable truth.

The first point is ingenuous. Half of today's Navy is aged under 25 and is thus subject to all the dangerous temptations placed before a generation that is, increasingly, targeted at a very early age.

One might reasonably expect the Navy to be a microcosm of society as a whole, though if discipline seems lax in comparison with the memories of those who served a generation or two ago, it is still measurably stronger — perhaps by a long way — than it seems to be 'outside.'

For the second, a once determinedly 'Silent Service' has over the past 15 years or so become increasingly open in its dealings with the media. When 'Sailor' hit the small screen in 1976 there was much wringing of hands in the Naval establishment over allowing fly-on-the-wall exposés of life at sea to dispel the sentimental notions of a public conditioned by the heavily sanitised image portrayed by World War II propagandists.

Today 'Sailor' is still remembered as the most successful of all Naval PR documentaries — and it is a measure of its success that 'Cutting Edge' cut nowhere as deep as it might have done in a more innocent, or more blinkered, age.

What these programmes did demonstrate was a determination on the Navy's part to rip out the core of any rotten apples it finds. It is important to place this in perspective. To a very large extent Naval discipline is self-discipline. Out of a healthy sense of their own preservation, the drug dealer's own shipmates are most likely to turn him in — which means a pusher's career — and his Naval career, too — is likely to be short. The overwhelming majority of the Navy's young people despise those who work, literally, to rock the boat.

Besides that, the Navy has long mounted a regular programme of educational counselling on drug abuse — and indeed abuses of all kinds. Few other organisations, apart from those dedicated solely to a single end, have come as close to addressing the problems of the age with such vigour.

Unemployment — a state upon which the drug pusher is quick to fasten — is one of those problems and the Navy's own resettlement organisation has lately enjoyed remarkable success in finding jobs for those leaving the service.

For one of our traditionally traditional institutions to have developed such an edge on its rivals is remarkable indeed.

DESIGN No 452 MINOR 1/00 93

AS APPROVED JANUARY '84

Their soul goes marching on

THE WRNS may be no more, but its spirit lives on in the serving RN — and in the several institutions that continue to support the interests of Wrens past and present.

The Association of Wrens dates back to the Service's earliest days. When the WRNS was first disbanded in 1919, the first Director Dame Katherine Furse suggested forming an organisation for ex-Service women and in March 1920 the Society of Wrens was born — the name changing to the Association of Wrens by the end of the year.

The chief aim was simply to keep friendships alive — but the views of ex-WRNS came to be represented in various organisations. The Wren magazine was launched, Service Women's clubs were started in London and Edinburgh, a holiday home opened in Sussex and HMS Wren was adopted.

When the WRNS was reformed in 1939 the Association of Wrens was well established. There are now branches overseas, including Australia, New Zealand and Canada who send delegates to the triennial reunion.

Applications to join are particularly welcome from younger people and The Wren magazine, which appears three times a year, encourages articles from women in the serving Navy.

Hardship

The WRNS Benevolent Trust has retained its name as well as its purpose now that women have become fully integrated into the RN.

Formed in 1941 to provide support for all serving and ex WRNS officers and ratings and their dependants who suffer financial hardship, it currently dispenses over £120,000 a year in grants to those in need.

Although the rising cost of living causes particular distress to the elderly, who receive regular help with fuel and clothing, applications are also being received from younger people — and their

reasons for seeking aid are wide and varied.

Typical of recent requests are:

- Age 26 with one son. Separated with divorce pending. Husband's maintenance payments erratic. Heaters needed for the house.

- Age 28 with two children. Husband deserted her and she has accumulated debts.

- Age 71. Widow crippled with arthritis and living in ground floor flat with mentally handicapped son. Needed an electric wheelchair.

Restoration

On 14 December 1983 it was announced that one of London's most famous churches, St Mary-le-Strand, was to become the official church of the Women's Royal Naval Service, the Women's Royal Naval Reserve and the Association of Wrens.

St Mary-le-Strand was the first major project of James Gibbs (1682-1754) and there is a strong Italian Baroque influence. Work began in 1714 and the Church was consecrated in 1724.

The WRNS Book of Remembrance which has been housed at the Royal Naval College Greenwich was moved to St Mary-le-Strand. It records the names of all WRNS Officers and Ratings who died whilst still serving.

When the church was adopted parts of it were in urgent need of restoration and the gilded weather vane was repaired with subscriptions from the WRNS, WRNR and Association of Wrens.

Serving Navy women and ex-WRNS and WRNR personnel may use the church for weddings, christenings and other religious services one of the most recent being last month's annual Christmas concert.

- For details of the Association of Wrens tel Jane Hardie on 071-932 0111.

The wartime WRNS at Great Yarmouth had a highly successful band, of which the sailors were very proud. Today the Association of Wrens and the WRNS Benevolent Trust look after the interests of thousands of serving and ex WRNS officers and ratings. The former naval hospital at Great Yarmouth — used as a naval base, HMS Watchful, during the Second World War — has now closed (see page 23).



CAPITAL JOB IN ALBANIA



HUNDREDS of grateful villagers from a remote area of Albania turned out to welcome mercy flights by HMS London's Lynx helicopter during the ship's six-day goodwill visit.

Just two weeks before winter snows cut off the eastern farming village of Ceren, the locals, who had travelled miles by mule and on foot, took delivery of blankets, clothes and shoes.

Each airlift, to one of the poorest areas in Europe, took just half-an-hour over the 50-mile route and almost 600 kilos of aid were delivered under the auspices of the charity Feed the Children.

Working parties

Meanwhile, on board, a whip-round had raised £1,000 for jobbing materials and there were no shortages of volunteers to join working parties at an orphanage and hospital in the port of Dures where the Devonport-based frigate was alongside.

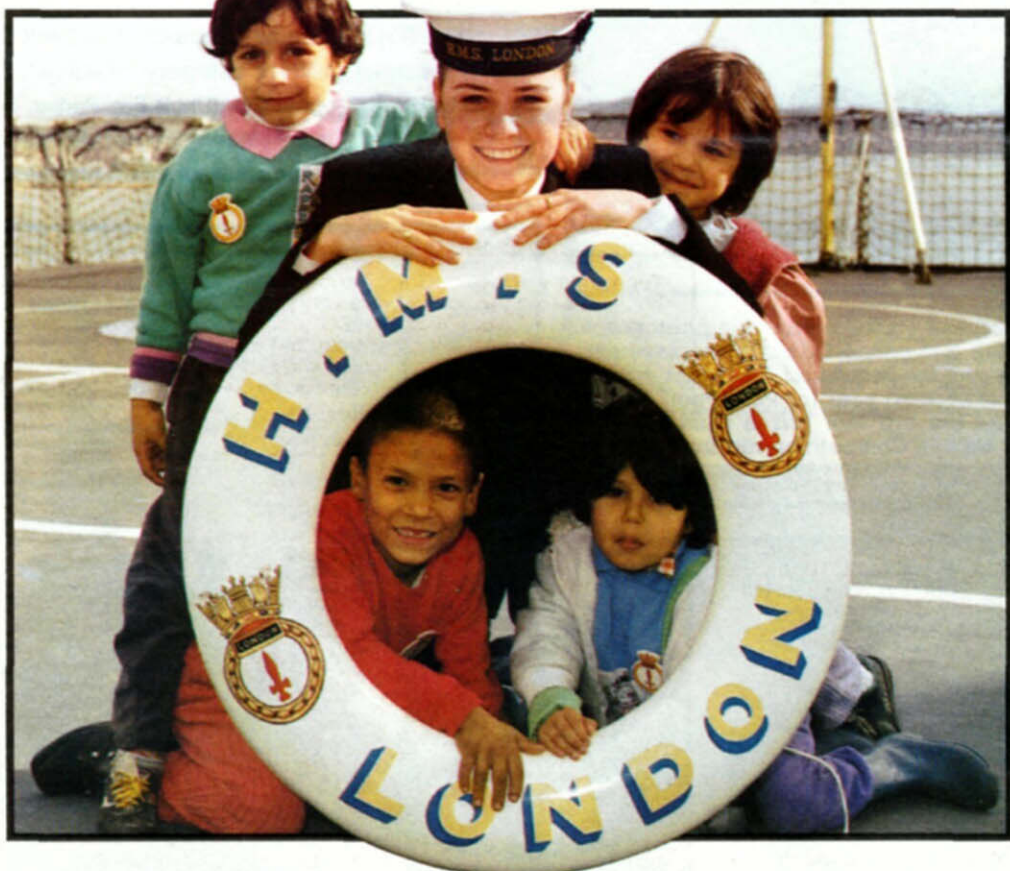
Because there was so much to do in

so little time, Marine Engineering Officer Lt Cdr Ted Main said they had to be "ruthlessly selective" in priorities, concentrating on vital repairs such as plumbing and electrics.

Sailors detailed to Dures Hospital, devastated two years ago by a storm, concentrated on scrubbing down and disinfecting a kitchen and a working ward, ignoring the rats and cockroaches around them.

"It was a magnificent effort by the Royal Navy," said Jeff Alderson, overseas officer for Feed the Children. "It took a lot of organisation and was done efficiently with tremendous empathy for the people they were helping."

Before leaving to rejoin ships patrolling the Adriatic, HMS London received a number of VIP Albanian visitors who attended a dinner on board hosted by Minister for Overseas Aid and Development Baroness Chalker.



● Top left: WREN Nicolette Dacosta, left, who brought bundles of clothes from the UK for the Albanian orphans, tries them for size helped by WREN Rachel Whelband. WREN Dacosta described the conditions endured by the children as "shocking".

● Above: HMS London's Lynx helicopter provides a lifeline for villagers from the remote Ceren area with a mercy flight of blankets, clothes and shoes.

● Left: Albanian youngsters who toured HMS London meet WREN Jo Sheriff.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Ann Keir.

All Blacks sent to Coventry

A BUSY time for HMS Coventry — after spending the first six months of last year in the Gulf, the Devonport-based frigate is off again for a five-month deployment in the Adriatic.

Before leaving, her commanding officer, Capt. Christopher Stanford, welcomed on-board "captain" Sean Fitzpatrick along with the rest of the All Blacks.

Close match

Sean and his team were in Devonport to play the Combined Services, eventually triumphing 13-3 after a closely contested match.

Far from being "sent to Coventry" the rugby players were made to feel right at home and enjoyed a tour of the bridge, operations and engine rooms.



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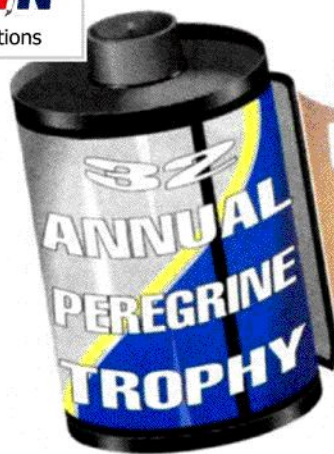
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IT'S NO SN

POA(Phot) Paul Cowpe scooped two awards at this year's presentation. His picture, right, of a Royal Marine recruit attempting the assault course at the Commando Training Centre, Lympstone, won PO Cowpe the Personnel at Work category. His selection of photographs, which won him The Royal Marines Portfolio, included the picture of Drum Major Andy Bridges, who leads the FOSNI band. He posed for this shot at the Toronto Sky Dome during a Military Tattoo celebrating Toronto's 200th anniversary. The icy wastes of southern Norway are well-portrayed in Dawn Patrol, bottom, as the Mountain and Arctic Warfare Cadre take part in an early-morning exercise.



On Golden Pond . . . POA(Phot) Fez Parker's stunning photograph of HMS Boxer, captured during last year's Orient 92 deployment, won him the Maritime Trophy and the Individual Award for colour. This has been an especially rewarding year for POA(Phot) Parker — he has also been awarded the top four prizes from the five available at the International Navies Competition run by Proceedings Magazine in the USA this year.

STANDARDS were as high as ever at this year's presentation of an excellent selection of photographs on show.

Open to photographers at home and abroad, there were 300 entries vying for the major prizes.

RN air station Culdrose won the best port of call award, while individual honours went to POs (Phot) Fez Parker and Tim Hall.

Judges at this year's awards included Mr. John Smith, British Institute of Professional Photography, picture editor of the Press Association, and the First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Benjamin Bathurst. He presented the VSEL Trophy for amateur photographers to POA(Phot) Fez Parker, who is currently serving in HMS Avenger.

Director of Public Relations (Navy), Capt. Peter Smith, commented that "once again the standard of photography was extremely high, demonstrating the flair of the Royal Navy Photographers. All proud of their efforts."

1993 Peregrine Tro

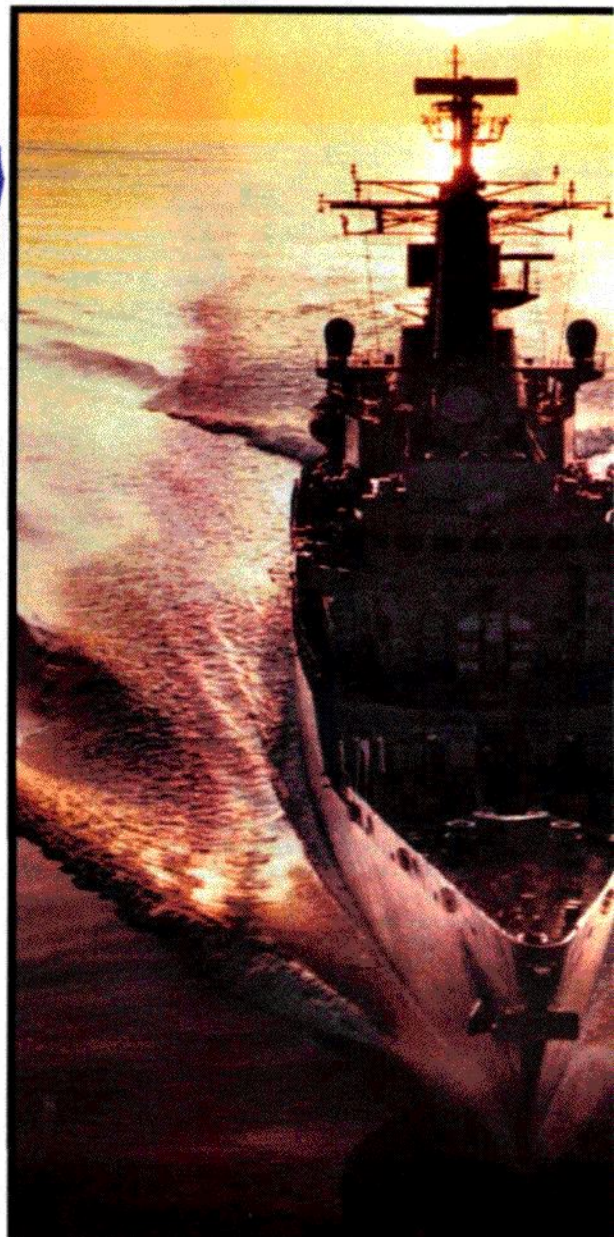
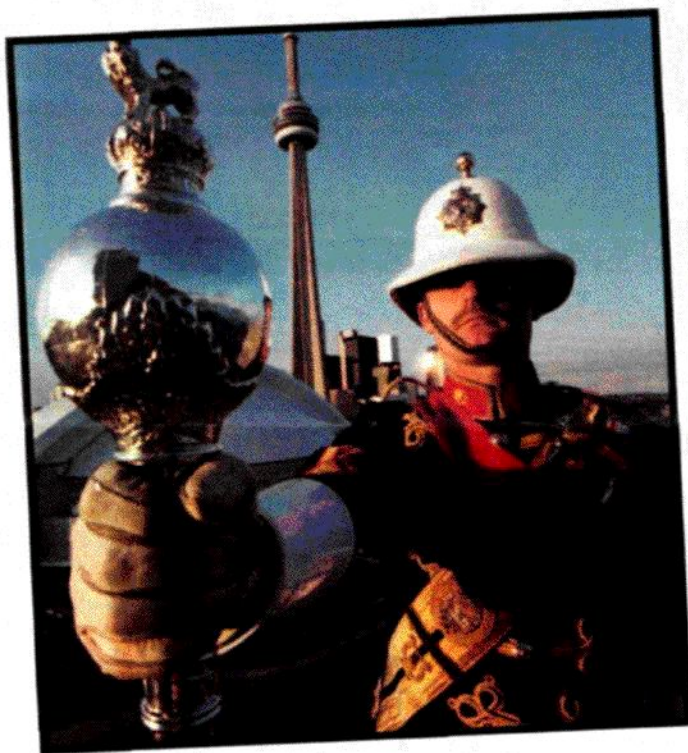
The British Aerospace Peregrine Trophy for the best photograph of a ship at sea, awarded to air station Culdrose.

The Royal Marines Portfolio: POA(Phot) Paul Cowpe won the Personnel at Work category: POA(Phot) Paul Cowpe.

Maritime Trophy: POA(Phot) Fez Parker, DPR(N).

Individual Award (Monochrome): POA(Phot) Tim Hall.

VSEL Trophy for amateur photographers: POA(Phot) Fez Parker.



MAP DECISION

ear's Peregrine Trophy with
w.
ad, at sea or ashore, there
folio with six colour prints,
t) Paul Cowpe, Fez Parker

Gil Cox, president of the
and Mr Mike Riches, chief
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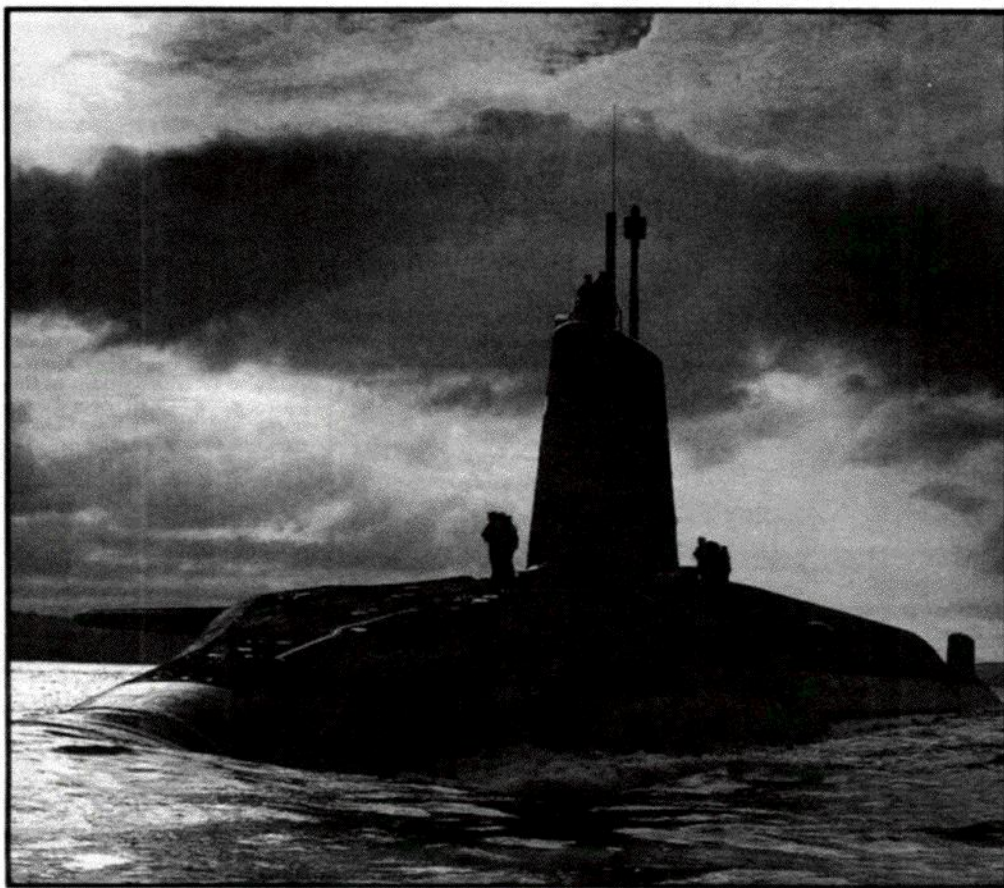
wpe, HQ Royal Marines.

wpe, HQ Royal Marines.

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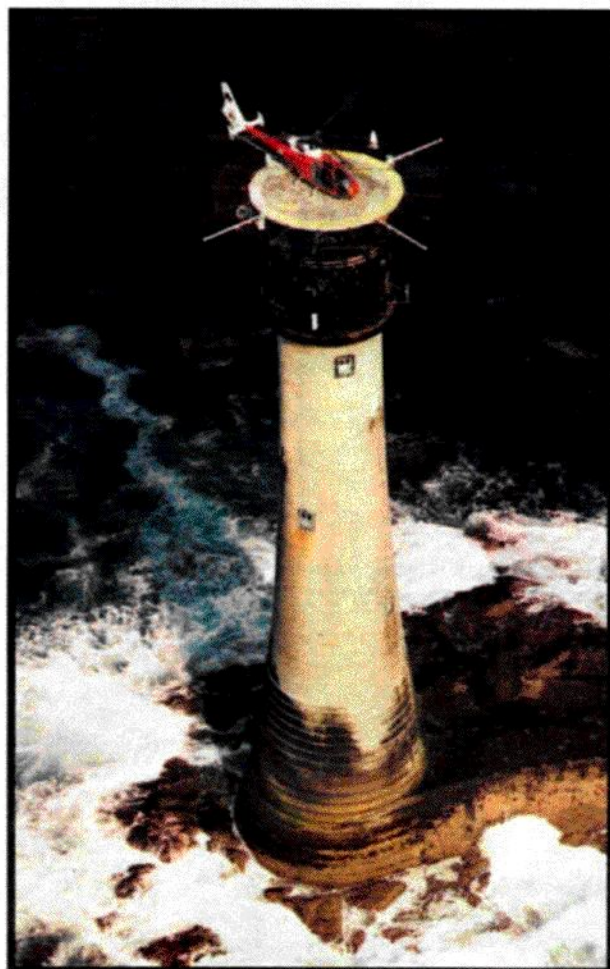
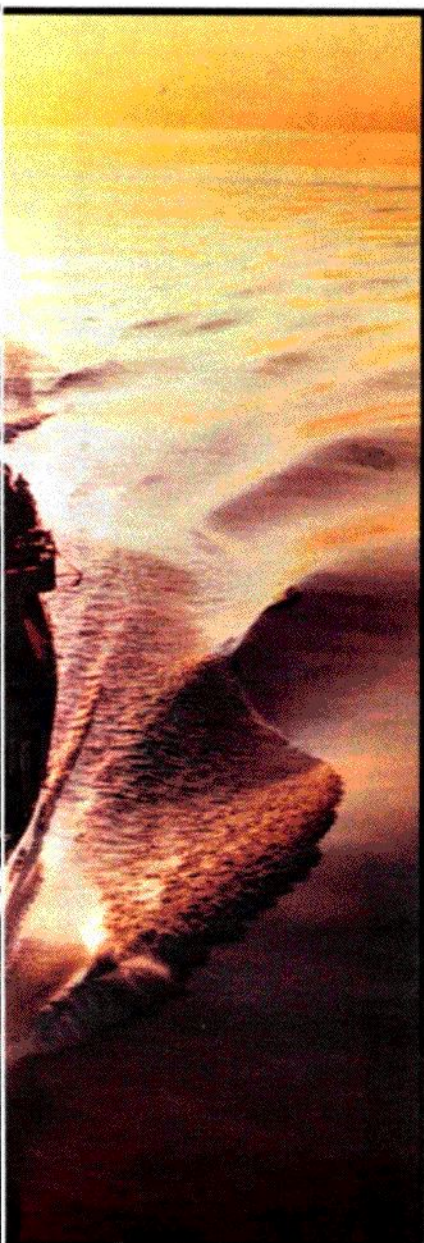
Hall, Clyde Submarine Base.

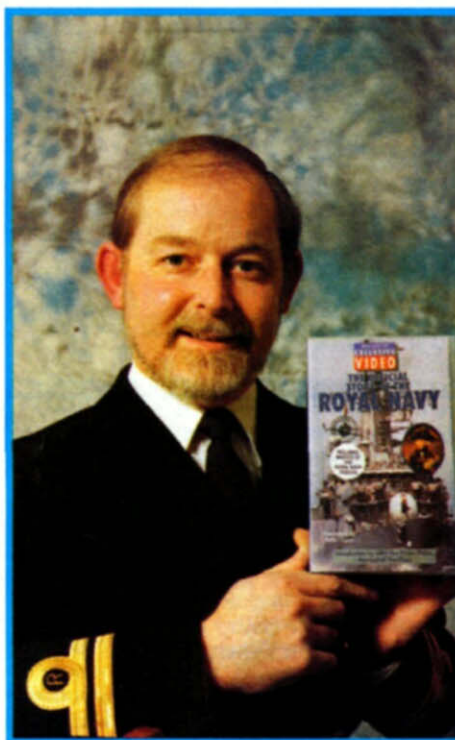
Wilson, HMS Avenger.



Three members of the photographic team based at the Clyde Submarine Base featured among the prizes. First place in the black and white category was won by POA(Phot) Tim Hall with his picture, above, of HMS Vanguard taken in the approaches to Gare Loch. LA(Phot) Ritchie Harvey won second place in the colour category with his picture of HMS Unicorn, taken off the Cumraes, while a photograph of RM Commandos exercising in Gare Loch won LA(Phot) Andy Gedge a "highly commended" in the same section.

Three different shots from RN air station Culdrose's winning portfolio. LWREN (Phot) Sahara Hill captures Birds of a Feather WRENMET Karon Dawson with one of the air station's Lanner Falcons, Tanera, while in her picture Basking Shark, below right, she captures another kind of bird, a Gazelle helicopter, at the Wolf Rock Lighthouse, off Lands End. LA(Phot) Paul Smith produced the "nuclear" effect in the dark room for his picture, bottom, of an air crew being decontaminated and named, appropriately, Melt Down.





The way we were

THE 'official stories' of the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines have been produced on video exclusive to W H Smith at £12.99.

Lt Steve Dargan, RNR, a freelance film and video producer, completed the RN version in just 12 weeks after spending a month locked in the bowels of the Imperial War Museum, viewing thousands of feet of film shot in both world wars, some of which has never been released before.

With a script by naval historian Eric Grove, it tells the story of the Senior Service in over a thousand years of peace and war. A companion video traces the history of the Royal Marines with more excellent archive film, some of which dates back to the Boer War.

Both carry an introduction by Prince Phillip, Admiral of the Fleet and Captain General, Royal Marines.

Now also released by DD Video is a commemorative tape of the Battle of the Atlantic, which includes coverage of the 50th anniversary programme of events at Liverpool in May last year.

Vice President, virtue President

LAST year **Bob Roberts** (an RNFC video release) dashed a mug of vitriol in the face of American politics. The best you can expect from the system, the film implied, is that you might get a mediocrity for President; what you should realistically expect is a crook. Now **Dave**, released this month on 16mm, comes along to offer a more mellow view.

It begins in the **Roberts** vein, featuring a President who is cold, ruthless, with the private morals of... well, a JFK. When he suffers a heart attack during one of his nightly indiscretions, the White House chief of staff sees an opportunity. Dave, an amiable presidential lookalike, normally used to decoy crowds, is co-opted into a scheme whereby he impersonates the President for real, while the chief of staff (the demonic Frank Langella, who earlier warmed up for this role

Screen Scene

by playing Dracula) pulls the strings.

How Dave extricates himself and redeems the situation is the main business on the film's agenda, reassuring us along the way that — of course, and despite **Bob Roberts** — there's not much wrong with the good old US of A. Sigourney Weaver as the President's estranged wife and Charles Grodin as the owner of a small neighbourhood business whom Dave summons to sort out the national debt both register strongly. Kevin Kline plays Presidents sweet and sour with a brace of nicely contrasted performances.

The recent 30th anniversary of the murder of President Kennedy has produced a deluge of associated material, registering the event via sober documentary, as an exercise in nostalgia or by providing a rehash of the endless speculation the shooting gave rise to. (It seems that, as in **Murder on the Orient Express**, everybody dunnit.) The new video release **Love Field** uses the Dallas nightmare as the starting point for a pleasing little fiction which, like **Dave**, aims straight for the "feel good factor."

Michelle Pfeiffer plays a Dallas housewife with an overbearing, mean-spirited husband. Typically, she manages to miss seeing her hero JFK on his arrival (at the Love Field airport of the title) and an hour or so later the airwaves are vibrating with the terrible news.

From a mixture of motives our heroine resolves that, at all costs, she is going to attend the President's funeral, and the body of the film is an account of her incident-strewn journey from Texas to Washington. It's a sort of singles version of **Thelma and Louise**, probably over-sentimental but, thanks especially to its star, likeable and rather touching.

Murder in the Heartland offers a strong corrective to all this cosiness. It reconstructs a real-life bloodbath from the late 1950s in which one Carl Starkweather, his 15-year-old girlfriend in tow, spent a couple of months roaming middle America, murdering ad lib until the police finally caught up with him. The most chilling aspect of Starkweather, as portrayed here by British actor Tim Roth (with impeccable Nebraska accent), is that he was not an obvious psychopath.

Clearly he was without conscience or the power of empathy, but were such deficiencies encompassed by the definition of insanity? The state of Nebraska thought not, and Starkweather was killed in the electric chair, an event which the film depicts as unflinchingly as it does the murderer's own atrocities.

This is a film which most emphatically does not aim for the "feel good factor", although Brian Dennehy is his usual tower of strength as a defending counsel. Incidentally, a fictionalised version of the same events — **Badlands**, with Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek — is also available from the video library. It makes for a fascinating comparison.

— Bob Baker

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FORGET 'MY BUDDY' YOU'RE THE BAIT!

MICHAEL McConville's 'Royal Marines rag bag' of anecdotes **Tell It To The Marines** (Cross Publishing £9.95) is packed with contributions from famous names as disparate as Paddy Ashdown and Angela Rippon, Jimmy Savile and Evelyn Waugh.

There is the young North Country Marine waiting to cross the Rhine in the spring of 1945: "Do you think you'll be first across?" a BBC commentator asks him. "Not if I can bloody well help it, mate."

There is the badly wounded Marine lying in No Man's Land on the Somme whose first concern was for his false teeth — they had cost him "two pounds three and nine before the war."

And there is Sgt Crick of the Royal Marines Artillery who after he went to pension in the early 1920s found a job with a circus operating a human cannonball. He recruited a former comrade in arms as his projectile — but a miscalculation at the gun-laying end brought the act to a tragic close as the human cannonball soared over the top of the net, crashed into the auditorium and broke his neck.

Asked afterwards for comment, Crick said: "He's a great loss. It will be very hard to find a replacement of the same calibre."

Mne Jock Macrae likewise had a sound sense of priority. After losing 14 days' pay for making an 'improper remark to a senior NCO' he soon afterward found himself in the thick of the fighting on D-Day.

Sitting in a slit trench with mortar bombs crashing all around him, he was heard to remark: "I bet no other stupid buffer here's doing this for nothing..."

As their compiler notes, while the valour and good conduct are implicit in most of these stories, it is unlikely that any of the events they describe would qualify for a battle honour.

The Royals are shown to have an admirable instinct for self-preservation. When Paddy Ashdown was preparing to go for a dive in shark-infested waters he saw that his 'buddy' was wearing a sharp stick — his "shark stick", he called it.

"I told him not to be ridiculous and that the stick would not keep off a shark. His reply was, 'It's not designed to, Sir. It's to poke you and make you bleed so that I have time to get away!'"

All profits from this collection, sponsored by the 1664 Club, will go to the Royal Marines Museum.

— JFA

Dog tired and as sick as the cat!

MEDICAL provision for British casualties in the Soviet ports of Murmansk and Archangel during the Second World War was often much better than has been generally allowed, according to a new history of naval actions in the Arctic.

In *Convoy!* (Arms and Armour £18.99) Paul Kemp quotes one medical officer's impressions of the hospital at Murmansk: "Conditions were appalling... and British naval patients were taken completely out of the control of their own medical officer. The food consisted entirely of black bread, which caused patients to develop a chronic diarrhoea."

But it later transpired that the officer in question had never visited the hospital and had relied on others for his information. Study of the official Admiralty records and those of the Royal Naval Medical Service has shown that the picture was by no means as bleak as it had been painted.

Mention is often made of how British casualties were given priority — even at times when large numbers of Red Army wounded from the Murmansk front were coming in.

Russian doctors are described as helpful and competent and the nurses, though often badly trained and lacking in experience, were willing to learn and sympathetic towards British patients, many of whom were understandably anxious at being stranded in an alien environment.

The food was described only as "plain and monotonous" by a survivor from the PQ 17 convoy, porridge being the staple, served even with meat and gravy. But it was hardly likely to be any worse than that enjoyed by the local population.

Otherwise, Surg Lt R. Lawrie of HMS Eclipse found that the arrangements, in all respects (author's italics) appeared very satisfactory indeed after he had landed a large number of survivors in March 1942.

"I talked to some 60 survivors from British merchant ships who said that they were all well looked after and were pleased with the attention which they had received."

Kemp notes that these remarks are all the more relevant for having been made at a time when Murmansk was experiencing very heavy air attacks which caused disruption to local services.

The ghastly cold, of course dominated conditions in the convoy ships and likewise disrupted normal naval routine. ERA R. J. Wood noted that as the days passed HMS London became more and more untidy: "... spilt food on the mess decks remained there, cocoa and sugar were all over the decks. I can hear the sound of granulated sugar crunching under my feet to this day."

"Seasickness was not uncommon, and on one occasion I saw the ship's cat being sick in a fire bucket. The cat was more considerate than some members of the ship's company."

The numerous minor illnesses caused by too many men living closely together were aggravated by the cold. A condition known as 'Arctic Eye' whereby the eyes would become very infected and stream with pus (which would freeze in the open air) thus causing a nasty and resistant impetigo, was very common among look-outs and others required to use instruments with rubber eyepieces.

Kemp provides a full section on the infamous convoy PQ 17 and a stirring account of the Battle of North Cape — but the information on conditions afloat and ashore succeeds brilliantly in throwing the whole campaign into perspective.

— JFA



At Your Leisure



SUBTLE AS AN AIR RAID

LATEST issue of the excellent *Imperial War Museum Review* (£9.50) carries three items of naval interest — Pacific Post, the newspaper of the British Pacific Fleet in the closing months of 1945; the removal of Roger Keyes as Churchill's first Director of Combined Operations; and the German battlecruisers' attack on the east coast ports in December 1914.

Pacific Post was, in fact, the RN's "first newspaper written, edited and printed by men of the Navy for men in the Navy." It was Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser's idea — "boredom was probably a greater enemy than the Jap... and the best way to conquer the loneliness of the greatest ocean on earth was to get news from home to the men in the Fleet with least possible delay."

Lt John Willis RNVR, who had earlier helped produce the RN magazine *Ditty Box*, was Editor — and he was adamant that it should be "run like a newspaper and not like a ship." This is a principle that has also guided *Navy News* — but in those days Pacific Post's daily leader sometimes upset the top brass with its overtones of socialism. Back home, of course, Labour had just come to power under Attlee, so Willis probably reflected the feelings of many of his readers.

On May 7 1940, as MP for Portsmouth North, Admiral Sir Roger Keyes made a damning attack in the Commons on the Chamberlain Government which some have said was instrumental in propelling Churchill to Downing Street a few days

later.

Before long Keyes, then 67, was rewarded with the appointment as DCO. His dismissal 15 months later had less to do with his being too old for the job, Jeremy Langdon suggests, than with personal failings. In the words of Eric Morris, Keyes "was about as subtle as an air raid. He despised the Chiefs of Staff and made no secret of his views."

Certainly Keyes had a particularly bitter relationship with Dudley Pound — but whatever it was that ultimately brought about his downfall, failure to carry out his duties wasn't it.

The great irony of Keyes' dismissal is that he had actually made a success of the job. He had organised 5,000 men into ten well-trained Commandos and developed the landing craft and troopships which would later play such a crucial role on the Normandy beaches.

It was not Keyes' fault that for the vast majority of his time as DCO his Commandos went unused.

In the same way that the city of Coventry was allowed to be immolated by the Luftwaffe to avoid compromising knowledge of German intelligence codes,

so the east coast ports had to suffer under the guns of Hipper's battlecruisers in 1914 — alerted to the planned attack by Room 40, the cryptographic centre in Old Admiralty Building, the Admiralty gambled on a tactical trade-off in return for major strategic results.

In other words, allowing Hipper to go ahead so that Beatty and Warrender's squadrons could intercept with a strong chance of wiping him out, which would have been a prize outweighing any damage to towns — of which only Hartlepool could be classed as a legitimate target under the Hague Convention — might sustain.

It almost worked. The devastation wrought by the bombardment of Hartlepool, Scarborough and Whitby was severe — particularly in the case of Hartlepool, where 1,150 rounds of heavy and medium calibre shells poured into the town. But the casualties were remarkably light — 102 killed and 467 wounded.

Unfortunately a combination of bad weather and a badly phrased signal by Beatty's Flag Lieutenant, Ralph Seymour, allowed Hipper to escape the net. — JFA



Above: Churchill and Keyes observing Commando exercises in Scotland, 1941.

Picture: Imperial War Museum

Batting for Navy and nation

ADMIRAL of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach's memoir *Endure No Makeshifts* (Leo Cooper £21.50) takes its title from some lines of John Buchan — and a good deal of its reads like a Richard Hannay story.

There is a lot of rushing through the night in motor cars and trains, schedules barely met, hasty conferences with people at the centre of affairs. The difference is that it all

is 8,000 nautical miles," but given the facts of the situation, "faced with a crisis we had a Prime Minister of courage, decision and action to meet it."

The real villain of the latter part of Leach's story is not General Galtieri (Greenmantle?). His battle with John Nott (another "man who could hood his eyes like a hawk", maybe?) over the notorious 1981 Defence Review that would have scuppered Operation Corporate had it been implemented, forms the most fascinating part of it — and it's all pure Buchan and all the better for that.

Australians

Leach chased the Defence Secretary through a freezing night down to deepest Cornwall to put his case against the plan to flog HMS *Invincible* to the Australians — "who haven't even got any VSTOL aircraft to operate from her anyway."

The argument carried on as Nott accompanied the First Sea Lord back to St Austell Station: "The icy cold hit us almost physically. Nott had no overcoat and I had little sympathy for his discomfort."

He was determinedly uncommittal: "To this day I do not know if Nott's untypical hesitation was due to conscience, misplaced kindness or simply an aversion to saying 'no' to my face."

Intervened

Nott said he would sleep on it — and the next morning the First Sea Lord got the answer he expected — though in the end, of course, the Falklands intervened to save *Invincible*.

With his craggy features, rat-trap jaw and bushy brows Leach was a gift to the Fleet Street cartoonists — and the fact that he could appreciate a joke against himself is evident in the selection he includes here.

There are many hilarious anecdotes that show a talent for friendship for high and low — though, again like Hannay, he prefers people who "play a

straight bat".

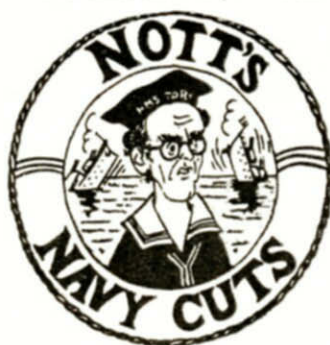
The best line comes from Lord Carrington. The day before Remembrance Sunday 1981 Leach was at home "refitting one of those whirlygig things which rotate in the wind and dry the laundry" when the line broke and he drove his right knuckle into his right eye.

Spotting him sporting a shiner at a reception after the Cenotaph ceremony, the Foreign Secretary "let out a loud guffaw — 'Oh no!' he shouted. 'I can't bear it. I know — it was John Nott!'"

Admiral Leach very sensibly makes no attempt to give a detailed account of the Falklands

War itself — many others at the sharp end have since done the job. In any case, this behind the scenes stuff makes a better read than most of them. Someone might even want to film it — after all, there have been four versions of *The Thirty Nine Steps*...

— JFA



actually happened, of course — though the author has a fine sense of drama and the remembered detail of topography, sights and sounds that colour these reminiscences do much to help the narrative on.

It is only lately that his key role in the Falklands War has received full recognition. He it was who gave the Prime Minister the assurance she needed that a Task Force could be assembled to recover the islands — and indeed should be.

"Why do you say that?" snapped the Prime Minister. "Because if we do not, or if we pussyfoot in our actions and do not achieve complete success, in another few months we shall be living in a different country whose word counts for little."

He could hardly have made a better appeal to Mrs Thatcher. Her grasp of the logistics may have been a little hazy ("And how long would it take to get to the Falklands Islands?" "About three weeks." "Three weeks, you mean three days." "No, I mean three weeks. The distance



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At Your Service



Reunions

HMS Spartan The 50th anniversary reunion will take place at The Nautical Club, Birmingham on Jan 29. Details from Ron Ellis on 021 423 2826 (eves).

HMS Whitesand Bay Assn will hold their sixth reunion on March 12 at The Royal Sailors' Home Club, Portsmouth. Details from Geoff Nightingale, 268 Galley Hill, Gadebridge, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 3LD (tel. 0442 63405).

HMS Constance, 1947-51 Commissions held a successful min-reunion in London on Nov. 13-14. The annual reunion will take place on May 6-7 and to ensure bookings contact Ernie Balderson, 43 Old Place, Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 7HR (tel. 0529 413410) before Jan. 24.

RN Electrical/Radio Artificers Apprentices Series II, April 1952-Dec. 1954: All those interested in attending a reunion later this year contact Lt.-Cdr. W. R. Legg, Colingwood Maintenance Unit, 614 Building, HMS Collingwood, Fareham PO14 1AS (tel. 0329 822329 or 0329 286262).

HMS Tattoo (1943-46) will hold their seventh reunion at The Royal Sailors' Home Club, Portsmouth on June 15-16. Details from Arthur (Joe) Rue, 30 East Dr., Blunsdon Abbey, Swindon, Wilts. SN2 4DP (tel. 0793 724490).

HMS Petunia (1941-46) will hold their sixth annual dinner at the Angel Hotel, Royal Leamington Spa, on May 13. Details from Mr. G. C. Shaw, 821 Dorchester Rd., Upwey, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 5LB (tel. 0305 813372).

HMS Cairo Old Hands Assn are holding their next reunion at the Union Jack Club on June 11. Details from Jack Harris, 72 St. Leonards Caravan Park, Ringwood Rd., West Moors, Wimborne, Dorset BH22 0AQ (tel. 0202 894121).

HMS Devonshire (1960-83) will hold their next reunion at The Belgrave Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool on Feb. 26. Details from Sandy Saunders, 6 Ty-Brih, Dingeston, Monmouth, Gwent NP5 4DP (tel. 0660 83435).

HMS Indefatigable Assn will hold their next reunion at HMS Nelson on April 9. Details, enclosing s.a.e., from Jack Hibberd, 23 Canterbury Ave., Southampton SO2 8EB (tel. 0703 397183).

HMS Cleopatra Assn will hold their ninth reunion at The Seacrest Hotel, Southsea on May 21. Details from Mr. F. E. Daniel, 45 Glebe Rise, King's Sutton, Banbury, Oxon. OX17 3PH (tel. 0295 810024).

Helicopter units of the 1950s' Malaysian Emergency: Former crew members met on Oct. 30 for the second successful joint RN/RAF reunion. The 50th anniversary of 848 NAS was also celebrated. This year's event will be held on Oct. 1 — further members are sought. Details from Les Smith, Oakdale Lodge, Hopwood, Alvechurch, Worcs. B48 7AT (tel. 021 458 4662).

HMS Diana (1956-57) will hold their next reunion at the Nautical Club, Birmingham on Oct. 8. Details from S. Jenkins, 69 Bushmore Rd., Hall Green, Birmingham B28 9QY (tel. 021 778 3765).

HM ships Undine and Urchin will hold their next reunion at The Seacrest Hotel, Skegness on March 25. Details from Stan De Ath, 28 Main St., Sewstern, Grantham, Lincs. NG33 5RF (tel. 0478 860833).

Hawke Division Artificer Apprentices, RNATE, Torpoint 1941: After a successful first reunion held on Oct. 26 a "passing out" anniversary reunion will be held this year. Details from Don Cole, 7 Holmfield Rd., Drayton, Portsmouth PO6 1RB (tel. 0705 385353).

HMS Mastodon, Exbury, Nr Southampton: A reunion, in Exbury, is being arranged to commemorate the 50th anniversary of D-Day and a ticket-only reception, tea and dance and exhibition of war-time memorabilia will be held at Exbury Gardens on May

29. Anyone wishing to attend and/or loan relevant memorabilia can obtain details from Mrs. Sheila Piggott, the Estate Office, Exbury, Southampton SO4 1AZ.

HMS Chinkara Nostalgia Gathering will be held at The St Ives Hotel, St Annes-on-Sea, near Blackpool on June 13-16. Details and booking form from Collin (Butch) Baker, Malkin Cottage, Blackpool Old Rd., L. Eccleston, Preston PR3 0YQ (tel. 0995 670495).

HMS Rocket held their fifth reunion and 50th anniversary of the ship's commissioning at the Union Jack Club on Oct. 30. Any shipmate not on the mailing list but wishing details of future reunions contact Bill Clitheroe, 48 Lower Foster, New Brent St., Hendon, London NW4 2DH (tel. 081-202 5996).

HMS Euryalus Assn held a successful reunion dinner at The Royal Sailors' Home Club, Portsmouth on Oct. 13 at which the dedication of their new standard took place. Anyone wishing to join the association should contact The Secretary, HMS Euryalus Association, 3 Wellspring Rd., Gloucester GL2 0NL.

Anti-Submarine Warfare Instructors' Assn will hold a forum in HMS Drake's WOs' and SRs' Mess on Feb. 16, the meeting is open to all serving Senior Sonar Rates and ex-serving members. Details from the vice-chairman on 0705 210522, ext. 4647, or the secretary on 0705 210522, ext. 4320.

MCM10: Former members are invited to attend a staff reunion to mark the disbandment of MCM10 on March 19. Details from Lt. D. Payne, Algerine Building, HM Naval Base, Rosyth, Fife (tel. 0383 425213 or Rosyth Naval Base ext. 65213).

HMS Dainty Families Assn will hold a buffet evening in Portsmouth on February 24 to commemorate the sinking of H53 in 1941 and the first commissioning of D108 in 1953. All ex-Daintys are welcome as are those who served in HMS Hasty on February 24 1941. Details, enclosing s.a.e., from Peter J. Hillman, 15 East Mead, Pagham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 4QT (tel. 0243 265901).

FIFTY YEARS ON

A LOOK BACK at the wartime operations of the Royal Navy half a century ago this month.

The amphibious landing at Anzio was the major operation in January 1944. Undertaken to help the Army advance from the Salerno bridgehead, which was making a slow progress, it involved a large fleet of Landing Craft and escorts.

Shipping losses were half those of the corresponding month in 1943, and a quarter of January 1942. 26 ships of 130,000 tons were sunk worldwide, the greatest number (eight) in the Indian Ocean where U-boats were now operating and escorts were thin.

- Principal events included:
- 1: First use of a helicopter in sea warfare — a Sikorski R4 was embarked in MV Daghestan in Convoy HX 274.
 - 2: HM trawler Wallacea sunk by German E-boat off Mounts Bay, Cornwall.
 - 3: HMS Tweed sank by U-305 West of Cape Ortegal.
 - 4: HMS Baynton and HMCS Camrose sank U-757 in SW Approaches. RAAF Sunderland sank U-426 submarine in Bay of Biscay.
 - 5: HMS Tilly Ho sank Japanese cruiser Kuma in Malacca Strait.
 - 6: RAF Wellington sank U-231 in NW Atlantic.
 - 7: HM ships Glenarm and Wanderer sank U-305 in N. Atlantic.
 - 8: HMS Violet sank U-641 in N. Atlantic.
 - 9: Anzio landing — 58 warships supported the large fleet of Landing Craft. Three warships, Spartan, Ingfield and Janus, were sunk by German air attack on this and subsequent days.
 - 10: HMS Janus sunk by German aircraft torpedo attack. Heavy loss of life.
 - 11: HM ships Mauritius and Kempenfelt bombed coast road near Formia, Italy.
 - 12: RAAF Sunderland sank U-571 off Black-sod Bay, Ireland.
 - 13: HMS Spartan sunk by German glider bomb.
 - 14: RAF Wellington sank U-364 in the Bay of Biscay. HM ships Meteor and Whitehall sank U-314 off North Cape. HMS Hardy torpedoed U-278 off Bear Island, sunk by own forces.
 - 15: HM ships Maggie, Starling and Wild Goose sank U-592 in W. Approaches.

Taken from The Royal Navy Day by Day.

Over to You

HMS Dartmouth, 1920: Tony Cutler, 4 West Way, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 2EP would like to hear from any members of the ships company.

HMS Harrow and HM ML1145: Mr W G Greenless, 6 West Mount, The Mount, Guildford GU2 5HL (tel. 0483 66975) would like to hear from anyone who has photos of the ships.

HMS Undaunted 1974: Mark Sharratts, Flat C1, Bateson Hall, The Mary Rose St, Portsmouth PO1 2BL would like to hear from anyone who has a photograph of the ship's company from 1973 or 1974.

HMS Ringtail, RNAS Burscough (1945-46): Alec Powell, 82 Belmont St, Southport, Merseyside PR8 1JH (tel. 0704 531722) would like to hear from anyone who served in the ship to help with historical research.

NAVSOOTH and the 43 activations of NAVOCFORMED: Guy Toremans, Loveld, 3212 Pellenberg, Belgium would like to hear from anyone who served in RN ships which took part in the 43 call-ups — potted histories, main events, photographs etc.

Convoy, Clyde area, mid-Dec. 1943 (PO Stratheden): W A E Nunn, 146 Northumberland Ave, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 2HR would like to hear from anyone who can name the RN vessels which escorted the convoy, which left the Clyde area in mid-Dec. 1943 and which approached the Straits of Gibraltar late on Christmas Eve afternoon.

RN escort force of armed trawlers (HM ships Bedfordshire, Coventry City, Cape Warwick, Le Tigre, Kingston Ceylonite, Northern Chief, Lady 'Elsa, Arctic Explorer and HMFT -22: James R Reddy Jr, R2 U/W Consultants, PO Box 1956, Morehead City,

National Fleet Air Arm Assn has commissioned a new branch, the Angus branch, based at Arbroath and any old shipmates wishing to join should contact Bob Everett, 18 Dalhousie Terrace, Montrose, Angus DD10 9BX (tel. 0674 72539). Other branches are proposed at Dundee, the Glasgow area, Brighton and Stoke-on-Trent. Details from Peter Anderson, 2 The Waldrons, Thornford, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 6PX (tel. 0935 872525).

National Service Upper Yardman Class, No. 265 (1955-56), HMS Ocean, is planning a reunion for Trafalgar Day, Oct. 21 at the Naval Club, London, and organisers would like to contact PO Harris, a gunner from the West Country who was later commissioned, PO MacDonald, a TAS rating from Devonport, CPO Rumble, also a gunner from the West Country, and CPO Williams, a TAS rating, again from the West Country. Anyone knowing of their whereabouts should contact Peter Smith, Three Chimneys, Gravely Hill, Caterham, Surrey CR3 6ES (tel. 0883 347919).

HMS Cavalier (1944-72): Sid Anning, 14 Kipling Gardens, Crownhill, Plymouth PL5 3DD (tel. 0752 768201) would like to hear from old shipmates wishing to celebrate the ship's 50th anniversary in South Shields on Aug. 26-29. He would also like to hear from Peter (Soapy) Watson, from Middx., and Ben Searle, from Warrington, in Surrey.

HMS Jupiter, Battle of Java Sea, 1942: Bernard Fallon (tel. 0482 502095) and Bill Wakeham (tel. 0364 73547) would like to hear from any other survivors.

The Ponam Ass would like to hear from anyone who served on the island during 1944-45, especially ships visiting from the Fleet Train. Contact H Bannister, Brook Farmhouse, Brook St, Woodchurch, Ashford, Kent TN26 3SR.

HMS Tyne, Pacific Fleet: Alex Wood, 36 Kimberley Rd, Penylan, Cardiff, South Wales would like to hear from ex-CPO Reg Kneebone, from Plymouth.

HMS Siskin, Fort Rowner, Gosport, 1950s: Ron Swanwick, 23 Wallis Close, Draycott, Derbys. DE72 3QS (tel. 0332

North Carolina 28557, USA is researching the RN escort force of armed trawlers (approximately 24 in number) which was sent on loan to the US east coast in Feb. and Sept. 1942 and would be grateful for any information.

Naval Brigade, Antwerp 1914: David Jones, 5 Cotehele View, Calstock, Cornwall PL18 9RD (tel. 0822 833750) would be interested in hearing from survivors or anyone who has information about the campaign.

HM ships Bramble, Achates, Zenith and Nairana: Mr J McHugh, 3 Maypole Court, Bootle, Merseyside L3D 0QD would like to hear from anyone who has photographs and/or cap tallies for the above-named ships.

HM ships Charybdis, Cornwall and Maori (1938-43): Gordon Smith, 5 Queens Rd, Penarth, South Glamorgan CF6 1DH (tel. 0222 709704) would like to hear from anyone who served with his father Ordnance Artificer George Charles William Smith. He would like to know what his father's job was in HMS Charybdis, where HMS Cornwall served and visited from Jan.-May 1938 and where HMS Maori served and visited from Dec. 1938-May 1940.

47th LCT Flotilla, Sword Sector, Queen Beach June 6 1944: Mr D S Osborne, 11 The Poplars, Wendover Bucks HP22 6NP (tel. 622996) requires pennant numbers of craft involved in the above-mentioned flotilla and to pinpoint them at the times of beaching.

HM ships Anson, Burghhead Bay, Tredmadoc Bay and Highflyer: Reg Gillman, 6 Maidstone St, Victoria Park, Bristol BS3 4SW requires cap tallies for the above-mentioned ships.

Calling Old Shipmates

873378) would like to hear from Lieut.-Cdr. Peter Bagley, ex-c.o. of the School of Aircraft Handling. He would also like to hear from ex-CA AH Doug Cribble, last seen at the Chockheads reunion at Lee-on-Solent.

HM 74th LCT Flotilla S.E.A.C.: J Archer (tel. Denton, Lancs., 336 8453) would like to hear from William (Bill) Harrison, last seen in Singapore 1945 and late of 152 White Lodge, Handforth, Wilmslow.

HMS Kenya: Harry Walker, 44 Brampton Rd, West Melton, Nr Rotherham, Sth Yorks (tel. 0705 479619) would like to hear from old shipmates, in particular Ted Shaw of Manchester.

HMS 41 Independent Commando RM, Korea 1950-52: Fred Hayhurst, 3 Caernarvon Gardens, Plymouth PL2 2RY (tel. 0752 779589) would like to hear from anyone who served in the unit. Reunions are held in the UK and with USMC in the USA.

HMS Dunluce Castle, Feb. 1940: G F Williams, 23 MacDonald Ave., Dagenham, Essex RM10 7DJ (tel. 081 593 9362) would like to hear from old shipmates, in particular David Bailey, Taffy Pyke, Harry Boreham, Nobby Clark, Alf Price, Fry, Moss, Thompson and Hamilton.

HMLCF(L)6 (1942-43): Dick Hale, 7 Quarry Hill, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0HH (tel. 0732 452107) would like to hear from RN and RM personnel.

HM ships Bellona, Haida, Tartar, Ashanti, Mauritius, Ursa, Brissenden, Tansate and HMCS Iroquois: A group of French historians and former members of the French Resistance are seeking personnel to attend a celebration, in summer, marking a series of naval actions off the Vendee coast in 1944. Anyone wishing to attend or who has information regarding the actions contact Mme. B Gaubert, 21 rue des Roses, 85100 les Sables, Vendee, France.

HMS Salford: The ship's company are trying to contact ex-members of the unit and/or CTC Manchester. Contact them at HMS Salford, The Old Town Hall, Bexley Square, Manchester M3 5AJ (tel. 061 832 7760) with current address and dates of service.

RNAS Culham, HMS Hornbill (1948-51) and HMS Zest (1951-52): Peter (Sharkey) Ward, 77 Somerset Rd, Marham, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR29 4QD (tel. 0493 748233) would like to hear from Stewards serving in Pegasus wardroom, in particular PO Gus Harris, Ginger Taylor, Harry Leigh and Wrens Heather June and Joyce. He would also like to hear from CK Gubby and STD George Richardson.

Class 210, Torrington, HMS Ganges, Higham Court Camp, Glos., and HM ships Calcutta, Alicantana, Thrasher and Scotsman (1939-45): F J Cable, 382 Moorside Rd, Urmoston, Manchester M41 8TL would like to hear from old shipmates, in particular anyone who volunteered to test a typhoid inoculation.

RN crews rescuing ditched aircraft: Ken Rimell, 16 Gifford Rd, Bosham, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8LD (tel. 0243 572967) would like to hear from anyone who assisted when a Lancaster Bomber 61 Squadron ditched in the Cherbourg area early on April 14 1944. The crew were picked up by a RN MTB or MGB, possibly a Fairmile B, whose skipper was Lt Flett. Survivors were taken to the boat's home port of St Marys, Scilly Isles. He would also like to hear from any RN personnel who assisted in the rescue of ditched airmen during the war who may like to attend a reunion in July.

HMS St Vincent, Frobisher 550 Class, 1963: Mike (Griff) Griffiths, 10 Morville Drive, Wellington, Telford TF1 3JA (tel. 0952 254825) would like to hear from old shipmates.

HMS Morecambe Bay, the Lana Turner, John Wayne trip (1945-55): I A (Jimmy) Beattie, Riversea, Kingswear, Dartmouth, Devon TQ6 0BS (tel. 0803 752332) would like to hear from old shipmates.

HMS Exeter (1980-83): J Brownsword (tel. 0329 313212) would like to hear from PO(R) R E J Smith.

Empire Javelin LSI and LCA, Omaha Beach, D-Day, June 6 1944: M D Roberts, 31 Harrington Rd, Litherland, Liverpool L21 7NB would like to hear from old shipmates with view to a visit to Normandy.

HMS Gadwall (Belfast) FAA (1943-44): Bill Gumma, 149 Monks Way, Eastleigh, Hants. SO5 5BG (tel. 0703 391975) would like to hear from anyone who served in the embarkation unit, in particular anyone who was rescued from the Belfast Lough during 1944.

HMS Trenchard: Ex-LRO George Fleetham, 50 Lichfield Rd, West Cornforth, Co. Durham DH6 1JY (tel. 091 3720111) would like to hear from members of the ship's football team which won the Bermuda Cup, in particular Dickerson, Swainstone, Lind, Sidnell, Aitken, Service, Edney, Nolan and Skinner.

HMS Avenger: A D Sims, 26 Inns Lane, South Wingfield, Derbys. DE55 7LW (tel. 0773 834520) would like to hear from survivors or from anyone who served with H W Sims.

HMS Unicorn, Mess 109 (1944-45): Andrew Sharp, 75 Charolais Blvd, Apt 602, Brampton, Ontario L6Y 2RB Canada (tel. Canada 905 451 1988) would like to hear from old shipmates, in particular Sid (Bagsy) Baker, George Grayson, George Whipp, Nobby Hall and George Tate.

HMS Royal Arthur, Class 274, Sept. 1944: John Lindop, Holly Bank, Duddon Common, Nr Tarpeley CW6 0HG (tel. 0829 781567) would like to hear from old shipmates.

HMS Empire Spearhead, LSI, SS Empire Halberd and 539 Flotilla RM LCA (1943-45): D Howard, 5 Maynard Dr., St. Albans, Herts. AL1 2JX (tel. 0727 867243) would like to hear from former Royal Marines with view to a reunion this year.

HMS Ascania (1940-41): Mrs D E Twells, 4 Wardlow Rd, Ickleton, Derbys. DE7 8US would like to hear from anyone who served with Edward Cuthbert Nelson.

HMS Salvator, Christmas Island, Grapple Test 1957: G D Lee, Doverhay, 87 Peaslands Rd, Sidmouth, Devon would like to hear from old shipmates with view to a reunion.

HMS Ganges, Blake Division, 1935: Norman Hawkins, 4 Rose Brae, Liverpool L18 6JX (tel. 051 724 5639) would like to hear from old shipmates, in particular Instructor Boy Stangroom and Gunnery PO Teddy Rowe.

SS Filleigh, 1942, SS Warfield, SS Elkhana Crowell: Alf Harrison, 273 Grovely Lane, Northfield, Birmingham B31 4PS (tel. 021 608 7044) would like to hear from old shipmates.

HM ships Achates, Nairana and Bramble: Mr J McHugh, 8 Maypole Court, Bootle, Merseyside L3D 0QD would like to hear from old shipmates.

HMS Drake (1950-51): Reg Gillman, 6 Maidstone St, Victoria Park, Bristol BS3 4SW would like to hear from Alan "Taff" Hulland, with whom he served in the Barrack Guard.

HMS Ceres (1945-46): R A Harding (tel. 0352 761466) would like to hear from Lt. Tammedge.

RN choir, Bombay, and HMS Protector, 1945: Mr R S Moore, 7 Rogers House, Elmore Rd, Lee-on-Solent PO13 9DX (tel. 0705 553895) would like to hear from AB Ronnie Matthews and CPO Gill.

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THE London Flotilla of Naval Officers, which began as an informal group in November 1937, is open to all serving and ex-RN and WRNS officers together with those from the RNR and RNR and Merchant Navy.

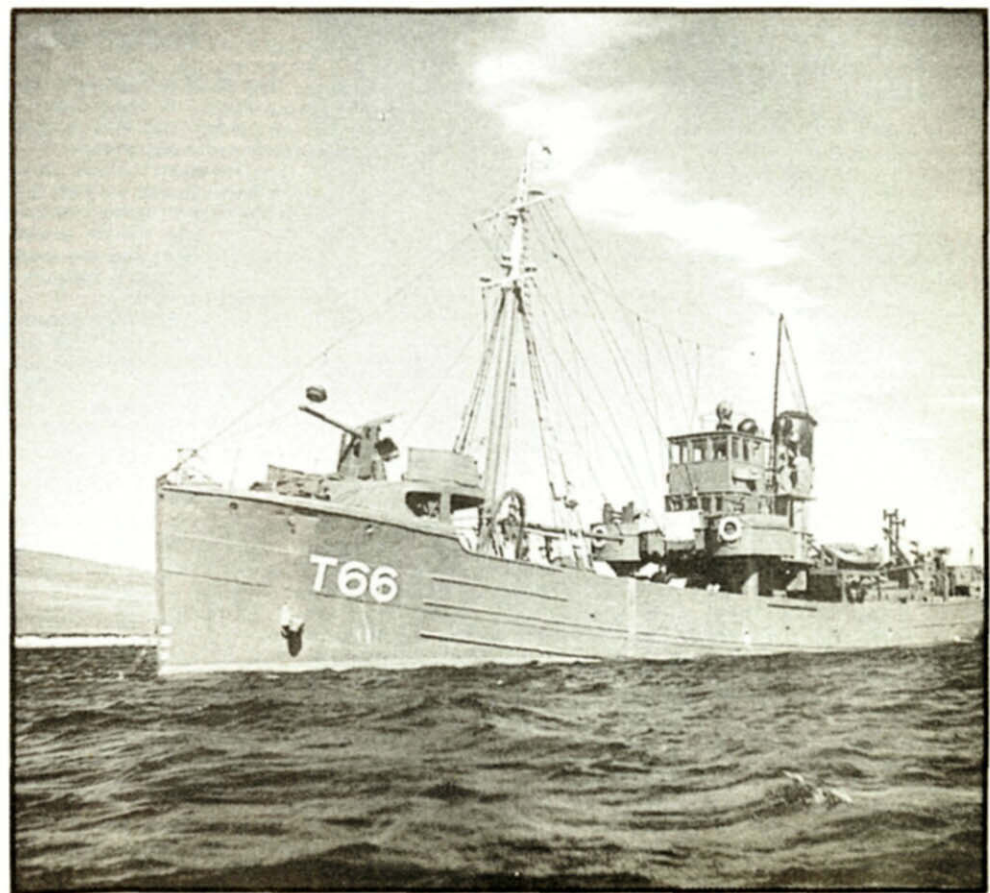
Apart from a number of social functions — the First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Benjamin Bathurst and his wife were guests at the Flotilla dinner last November — and church services at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, there is a full programme of monthly lectures during the winter months, regular ship visits and an annual Yacht Meet.

There is also an eight-page bulletin, issued every four months, which covers Flotilla events and invariably carries one or more articles in the popular "I Was There" series of personal accounts of past actions, some serious, others lighthearted, and all this for an annual membership fee of £4.

Future lectures include "The Break up of the USSR" on Feb 7 and "D-Day + 50" on March 7, both to be held at The Naval Club.

Further details may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Lt Cdr P. A. G. Norman, RD, RNR, Marden Rise, 81 Lower Road, Fetcham, Surrey KT22 9HG.

Officers join Flotilla



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Royal Naval Association



End of line for 'Blue Funnel' hospital

CLOSURE of the former naval hospital at Great Yarmouth brings the curtain down on a building steeped in naval history.

St Nicholas's stout portals admitted generations of patients and their selfless carers. The first to be treated there — wounded sailors returning from the Battle of Copenhagen — were visited by Nelson.

Shipmate Harry Lerner, chairman of the Great Yarmouth branch, said Nelson — a Norfolk man and deeply concerned about the welfare of sailors — played a key role in establishing the hospital which is now up for sale.

Work began on the building in 1800, on 270 acres of reclaimed sand dunes known as the Denes. It was completed in 1811 at a cost of £120,000.

At one stage it was used to confine French prisoners of war, whose craft work is on show at the local maritime museum.

When in 1844 the military lunatic asylum at Rochester was found to be unsuitable, the hospital was converted to house them, and by the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854, the hospital catered for all mentally ill Servicemen.

After the Army pulled out at the end of the 1860s the hospital catered for

the mentally ill of the RN and RM and later became known — and dreaded — by Servicemen as "The Blue Funnel Hospital."

During the Second World War patients were evacuated, the building renamed HMS Watchful and used as a naval base.

In 1958 it was transferred to the National Health Service, and renamed again as St Nicholas's.

Despite its changing roles St Nicholas's Hospital has never lost its distinctive naval character. Although the site now occupies only 11 acres, the chapel and clock tower remain virtually unchanged and the wards still

boast the names of famous admirals such as Nelson and Rodney.

Nor is it surprising to know that the hospital has generated its own collection of ghost stories, one of its most distinguished wraiths being a naval captain who is seen doing rounds at night in full ceremonial dress!

Ghosts or not, the Great Yarmouth branch is sad that the town's historic link with the Navy is now in the hands of auctioneers. Before they took over, members of the branch attended a de-consecration of the hospital chapel and honoured the memory of RN patients treated there and the staff who cared for them.

Branch lines

Trafford made good use of No. 10 Area publicity tent at the Flixton, Urmston and Davyhulme carnival, raising more £150 for a local hospital.

Book planned

David Saunders has been commissioned to write a book on the maritime memorials and mementos of Britain to be published at the end of the year. If branches have memorials for inclusion write to him at Wootton Bassett, Pointfields, Hakin, Milford Haven, Dyfed SA73 3EB.

VIP guest

President of the RNA, Admiral Sir Desmond Cassidi, was guest of honour at a dinner dance organised by the Brentwood branch.

Dahlia model

Shipmate John Trevillion, who served in HMS Dahlia during the Second World War, visited Cheshunt branch while on holiday from Canada. A model of Dahlia made by Shipmate Trevillion is displayed in Lowewood Museum, Hoddeston. The ship was adopted by Cheshunt in 1942.

Ypres visit

A moving experience is how members of Horley branch describe their visit to Ypres for a Remembrance Day service and wreath-laying ceremony. During their stay, visits were made to war cemeteries and to the trenches on Hill 62.

Down Under

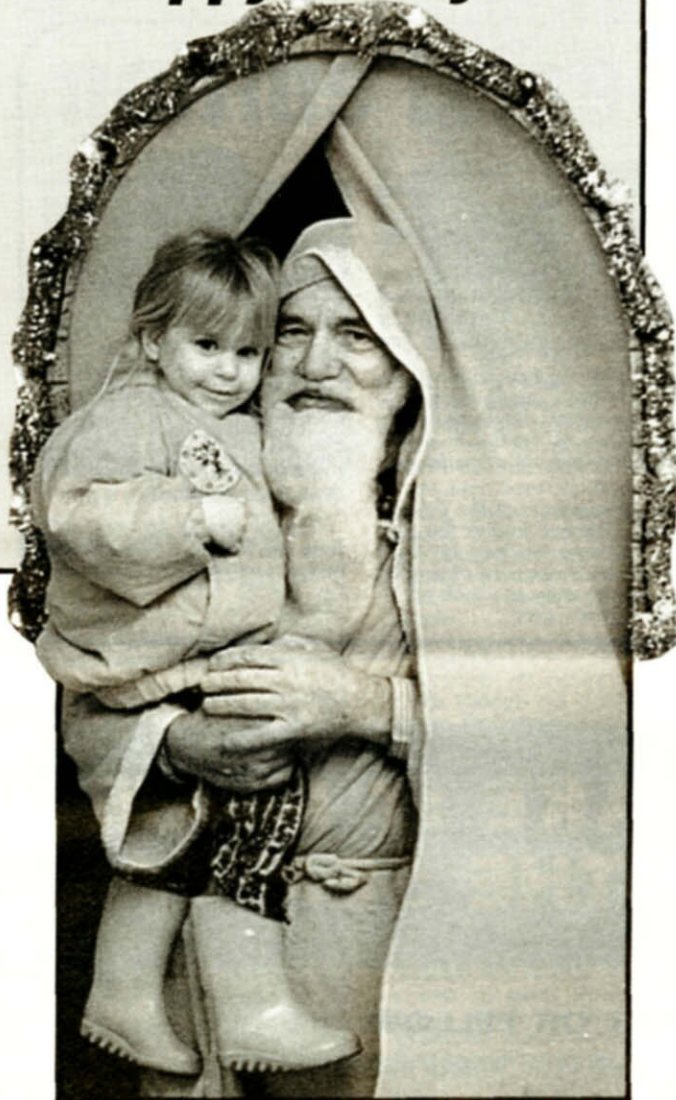
Weymouth standard was the only one from the UK on display at a Trafalgar reunion in Perth, Western Australia. It was carried by Shipmate David Rogers who was visiting with fellow shipmates John and Judy Ives. During their stay they were warmly welcomed by RNA branches.

Haverhill's happy new year

DISGUISED as Santa Claus, Haverhill branch secretary, Shipmate Gerry Plumridge, helps to raise funds for the Children's Ward of the West Suffolk Hospital.

The branch manned the Santa grotto in Haverhill shopping precinct in the run-up to Christmas, proceeds going to the children's ward which specialises in treating leukaemia.

Haverhill is a new branch which has recruited 37 members since its formation on October 5. Its commissioning came about through the efforts of five former members of Sawton branch who tired of making the 40-mile round trip to attend meetings at Sawton.



Picture by courtesy of Cambridge Evening News

Homage after graves 'find'

CHANCE visit by Shipmate John Bee of Norwich branch to a country churchyard in the heart of Cheshire revealed the graves of two former members of the Royal Navy.

They are believed to have died when their plane crashed on February 11, 1946, the churchyard being close to the former site of a Second World War airfield.

Their graves are in Byley Church alongside those of a number of British and Allied

BRANCH NEWS

air force personnel, and had gone unnoticed by members of Norwich until Shipmate Bee's discovery.

Now the graves of PO Airman G.G. Reynolds DSM (24) of HMS Condor and Cdr (E) L.B. Sharman (37) will not be neglected.

On Remembrance Day a short service was held in the churchyard after which wreaths were laid on graves by Shipmates Curbishley and Bee on behalf of Norwich branch. Wreaths were also laid by The Royal British Legion, the RAF Association and the local community.

Cheshunt standard, with those of the Fast Mine Laying Association and The Royal British Legion were paraded at a service in Christ Church, Waltham Cross, to mark the

anniversary of Trafalgar.

Following the service, conducted by the branch chaplain the Rev. Martin Banister, 40 shipmates and guests enjoyed refreshments with parishioners in the church hall. They included, Shipmates Jack Adams (president), Jack Simmonite (vice president), Ron Joy (chairman) and their wives.

Members of Wells (Somerset) branch turned out in strength for their Trafalgar Day commemoration which included a church service attended by the Mayor and civic dignitaries, the president No 4 Area, Shipmate Jeff Jeffries and former national council member Shipmate Ron Tremlett and their wives.

Following the service there was a parade through the city to music by the Weston-super-

Mare Sea Cadet band. The celebration dinner, attended by 40 shipmates and guests, was presided over by branch president Shipmate Roy Wood.

Nelson's prayer spoken by the chaplain of Redruth and Camborne, Father Ian Rutherford, got the branch celebration under way. The occasion was attended by Capt Peter Fish, captain of RNAS Culdrose and his wife.

Mr. Jack Olson, branch president of The Royal British Legion also attended with Shipmate David Hayes, branch president; and representatives of branches in the area including a contingent from the CPOs and POs Mess, Culdrose.

Supper was provided by the ladies section and included a Trafalgar cake made by Mrs. Ann Stevens.

VIP welcome for a Shilling!

SHIPMATE Syd Shilling of Wear (Sunderland) got more than he had bargained for when he stood in for the branch president to present awards to male and female cadets at TS Crawford.

On being welcomed aboard he learned that the Lord Mayor was unable to attend, so Shipmate Shilling ended up inspecting the Guard, attending Colours, presenting trophies and inspecting the Unit.

One of his more pleasant duties that day was presenting CPO Tony Neary, the branch chairman, with his Long Service medal.

MPs back ex-Service care plea by Legion

YEARS-LONG campaigning by The Royal British Legion has come a step closer to success with the support of an all-party group of MPs for better Government co-ordination of care for ex-Service people.

Twelve cross-party MPs were the original signatories to a Commons Early Day Motion which called for a Sub-Department of Ex-Service Affairs within an existing Ministry.

At present ex-Service people have to deal with any one of 17 different Government Departments for their various needs, says The RBL. A spokesman for the Legion told Navy News that he believed the sub-department could be set up without extra staff and by re-directing current resources.

Optimistic

Since the tabling of the Motion in November the move has attracted the support of 110 more MPs and the Legion is optimistic that more will sign to strengthen an approach to Government Ministers on the issue.

The RBL say they are urging their own members as well as other ex-Service organisations such as the RNA, to ask their MPs to sign the Motion.

The Legion's National Chairman, Ted Jobson, said The RBL's aim was to have a "one-stop shop" so that the special needs of ex-Service people and their dependants could be given "proper consideration" by staff who have a full understanding of their requirements.

Payment

He pointed out that while Britain has never had such a department other countries do, including the USA, Canada and Australia. Even Poland has set up a department since the end of the Cold War.

The Women's Section of The RBL is making a £20 cold weather payment to everyone in receipt of the Section's widows and ex-Servicemen's weekly allowance. Nearly 1,000 women, ranging in age from 32 to 100 receive the regular cash payment.

MISSING BADGE

Shipmate D. Newell, of Didcot, had his standard bearer's badge removed from his blazer during the Royal Tournament. If anyone can help telephone him on 0235 814341.

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Beaver back from Adriatic

AFTER a busy five-month deployment in the Adriatic the Devonport-based Type 22 frigate HMS Beaver, right, returned to her home port last month. She had been deployed as part of Operation Sharp Guard, a NATO operation in support of the UN embargo of the former Yugoslavia.

Much of the ship's time on station had been spent off the Montenegrin coast, monitoring shipping for potential sanction breakers. HMS Beaver also spent time patrolling the Straits of Otranto, between Italy and Albania, regularly boarding merchant vessels and, during four weeks spent in the area, her ship's company boarded 90 ships.

After this initial period of intense operations HMS Beaver's role changed and, with Commodore Maddison, of the Canadian Forces, and his staff still embarked, she became Flagship of the Task Group operating further up the Adriatic off the coast of Serbia and Montenegro.

The main purpose was to provide the final barrier in stopping any ship attempting to make a run for the Serbian/Montenegrin ports, suspected of carrying arms and other

banned cargoes. Not everyone was a potential gunrunner — during a severe gale HMS Beaver had to shepherd a small merchant ship, Amros, safely to anchor off Dubrovnik laden with a cargo of very seasick cattle!

During her deployment HMS Beaver also enjoyed port visits to Cagliari, Naples, Venice, Crete and Corfu.

The Cot Death Research charity has also benefited from the deployment as the ship had been host to Norman the Gnome, who was sponsored to be Beaver's mascot.

HMS Beaver is now spending time alongside in Devonport before a possible return to the Adriatic in spring.



HUNT UP IN HULL

DURING a visit to Hull the Hunt class mine countermeasures vessel HMS Middleton renewed her acquaintance with the Middleton Hunt in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

After official calls on the Lord Mayor the ship hosted a cocktail party for 30 hunt members which was reciprocated with supper at Boynton Hall.

The following morning members of the ship's company met up with riders and hounds at Garrowby Hall and enjoyed a day's hunting. A buffet lunch for hunt officials concluded an enjoyable week with relations between hunt and "Hunt" very much reinforced.

THE HEAT IS ON AT CULDROSE

AS part of National Fire Safety Week, the Cornwall County Fire Brigade held a joint exercise with RN firefighters at RN air station Culdrose and at the naval fire training facility at Predannack Airfield on the Lizard.

The visit coincided with a routine exercise at Predannack which enabled Penzance Fire Brigade personnel to gain invaluable practise in the hazardous art of aircraft firefighting alongside their naval counterparts.

Scharnhorst special edition

THE Royal Navy Philatelic Society (RNPS) issued a limited edition of philatelic commemorative covers (below) to

mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle of North Cape and the loss of the battle cruiser Scharnhorst. The covers were

issued at Narvik Postkontor, in northern Norway, on Boxing Day and incorporated photocards and associated text highlighting the event.

Some of the covers have been signed by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach who served as "A" turret officer in the first flagship HMS Duke of York during the Battle of the North Cape, Vice-Admiral Sir Lancelot Bell Davies, who served as a Midshipman in the cruiser HMS Norfolk, and AB Helmut Boekhoff, pictured right, one of the 36 survivors of the Scharnhorst. Helmut joined the ship in northern Norway in April 1943 and at the time of sinking he was on duty as a look out in the "crow's nest".



● Helmut Boekhoff

Further details are available from the RNPS, 1 Woodhenge, Badger Heights, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 8TT (tel. 0935 26240).



On trial but no errors

A RECENT logistics exercise with the Commando Logistic Regiment RM, off Browdown, in the Solent, involved HMS Fearless conducting trials with a Mexeflote for the first time.

The main objective was to ascertain the securing arrangements for the raft and the drills for the movement of vehicles from the tank and vehicle decks in HMS Fearless.

The trial, involving the 126 ft. long Mexeflote from the 17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC at Marchwood, was successful with most vehicles on board able to embark.

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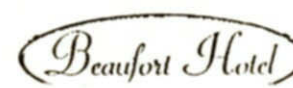
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Notice Board



Points

THE following list shows the total points of the men and women at the top of each advancement roster for petty officer and leading rates as at January 1, 1994. Intermediates (Int) indicates that personnel can be advanced before they are eligible to receive merit points or before the roster can be adjusted to take account of them. This means that personnel are advanced in "basic date" order. Dates shown against "Int." rosters are the basic dates of the top eligible personnel.

The number following the points (or basic dates) is the number of men who were advanced during December.

CCMEAML — Int (18.12.91), 2; **CCMEAL** — Int (15.7.93), Nil; **CCMEALSM** — Int (14.5.93), 1; **CCMEALMS** — Int (4.9.92), 1; **CCWEAAD** — Int (28.7.92), 1; **CCWEAWDO** — Int (28.7.92), 1; **CCWEAADCSM** — Int (20.7.93), Nil; **CCWEAWDOSM** — Int (13.11.92), Nil; **CCAEAM** — Int (1.5.92), Nil; **CCAEAR** — Int (1.5.92), Nil; **CCAEAWL** — Int (1.9.90), Nil; **PO(EW)(O)(RS)(W)** — Int (7.6.91), Nil; **LS(EW)(L)(O)(W)** — Int (14.7.92), Nil; **PO(M)** — Int (14.7.92), Nil; **LS(M)** — Int (10.3.92), 1; **PO(R)** — 242, 3; **LS(R)** — 145, Nil; **PO(S)** — Int (16.3.93), 3; **LS(S)** — Int (2.7.91), 1; **PO(D)** — 237, 1; **LS(D)** — 439, Nil; **PO(W)(O)** — Int (14.7.92), Nil; **LS(MW)** — Int (27.9.91), 1; **PO(SR)** — 386, Nil; **LS(SR)** — 239, Nil; **PO(SEA)** — 263, 3; **CY** — 308, Nil; **LRO(T)** — 294, 2; **RS** — 283, 1; **LRO(G)** — 232, Nil; **POPT** — 303, 1; **RPO** — 255, 3; **POMEM(L)(GS)** — Int (24.6.92), 1; **LMEM(L)(GS)** — Int (22.9.92), 2; **POMEM(M)(GS)** — 466, 5; **LMEM(M)(GS)** — 302, Nil; **POWEM(O)(GS)** — 163, 11; **LMEM(O)(GS)** — Int (7.11.91), 7; **POWEM(R)(GS)** — Int (7.7.92), Nil; **LMEM(R)(GS)** — Int (19.1.93), Nil; **POCA** — 159, Nil; **POCK(GS)** — 402, 4; **LCK(GS)** — 68, 5; **POSTD(GS)** — 577, 1; **LSTD(GS)** — Int (17.10.91), Nil; **POA** — 522, 7; **LSA(GS)** — Int (20.6.91), 5; **POWTR(GS)** — Int (12.6.91), 1; **LWTR(GS)** — Int (18.6.92), 1; **POMA** — Int (9.7.91), 1; **LMA** — Dry, 3; **PO(S)(SM)(O)** — Int (11.9.91), Nil; **LS(S)(SM)** — 350, Nil; **PO(TS)(SM)** — Int (25.3.92), Nil; **LS(TS)(SM)** — Int (19.8.91), Nil; **RS(SM)** — 233, Nil; **LRO(SM)** — Int (4.6.91), Nil; **POMEM(L)(SM)** — 343, 4; **LMEM(L)(SM)** — 62, 4; **POMEM(M)(SM)** — 787, Nil; **LMEM(M)(SM)** — 778, Nil; **PO(WSM)** — 379, Nil; **LOM(WSM)** — 198, Nil; **POWEM(R)(SM)** — Int (3.11.92), Nil;

LWEM(R)(SM) — 217, Nil; **PO(UW)(SM)** — Dry, Nil; **POSA(SM)** — 168, Nil; **LSA(SM)** — Int (18.6.92), Nil; **POWTR(SM)** — 85, 1; **LWTR(SM)** — Int (3.3.92), Nil; **POCK(SM)** — Int, Nil; **LCK(SM)** — 807, Nil; **POSTD(SM)** — 389, Nil; **LSTD(SM)** — 730, Nil; **PO(AH)** — 860, Nil; **LA(AH)** — 742, Nil; **POA(METOC)** — Dry, 1; **LA(METOC)** — Dry, Nil; **POA(PHOT)** — 308, Nil; **POA(SE)** — 438, Nil; **LA(SE)** — 231, Nil; **POACMN** — 445, Nil; **POAEM(M)** — 322, 2; **LAEM(M)** — 367, Nil; **POAEM(R)** — 103, Nil; **LAEM(R)** — 425, 1; **POAEM(WL)** — 414, 6; **LAEM(WL)** — 521, 6; **POAC** — Dry, Nil; **POWREN(R)** — 150, Nil; **LWREN(R)** — 105, Nil; **POWREN(RS)** — 307, Nil; **LWREN(RO)** — 244, Nil; **POWREN(PT)** — 227, Nil; **RPOWREN** — Int (5.11.91), 1; **POWRENCK** — Int (17.10.91), Nil; **LWRENCK** — Int (18.2.93), Nil; **POWRENSTD** — 788, Nil; **LWRENSTD** — Int (20.6.91), Nil; **POWRENSA** — 335, 1; **LWRENSA** — Int (20.6.91), 2; **POWRENWTR** — Int (16.7.91), 4; **LWRENWTR** — Int (4.9.92), 6; **POWRENWTR(G)** — 227, Nil; **LWRENWTR(G)** — Int, Nil; **POWRENMETOC** — Int, Nil; **LWRENMETOC** — Int, Nil; **POWRENPHOT** — Int, Nil; **POWRENAEM(M)** — 367, Nil; **LWRENAEM(M)** — 273, Nil; **POWRENAEM(R)** — Int (7.11.91), Nil; **LWRENAEM(R)** — 339, Nil; **POWRENAEM(WL)** — 418, Nil; **LWRENAEM(WL)** — 365, Nil; **POWRENETS** — 357, Nil; **LWRENETS** — 143, Nil; **LWRENTL** — 470, 1; **POWRENWA** — 131, Nil; **LWRENWA** — 169, Nil; **POWRENDHYG** — 193, Nil; **POWRENDSDA** — Int (9.7.91), Nil; **LWRENDSDA** — 112, Nil; **POEN(G)** — Int (10.3.92), 1; **LEN(G)** — Int (8.6.93), 1; **POMN** — Int (10.3.92), Nil; **POMA(Q)** — 101, Nil; **LMA(Q)** — Int (10.9.91), 3.

The Basic Dates quoted for the female ratings in the following categories, which have no examination for the next higher rate, are applied in accordance with BR1066 Chapter 22.

POWRENQA — Int, Nil; **POWRENTEL** — 1079, 1.

In accordance with DC(RN) 37/93 all qualified female seagoers now appear on the RN rosters only.

It should be noted that the number of B13s issued in the female categories are those advanced from the female Shore Roster.

It should be noted that the November 1993 award of C281 r rit points are not applied to the rosters until February 1 1994.

Appointments

TO BE promoted Vice-Admiral are Rear-Admiral M. G. Rutherford, who succeeds Air Marshal Sir Roger Austin as Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Systems) in March; Rear-Admiral R. Walmsley, taking over as Controller of the Navy from Vice-Admiral Sir Kenneth Eaton on May 31; Rear-Admiral M. A. C. Moore, succeeding Vice-Admiral Sir David Dobson as COS to Commander Allied Navy Forces Southern Europe this month; and Rear-Admiral J. R. Tod who becomes Deputy Commander Fleet in succession to Vice-Admiral Sir Geoffrey Biggs in June.

Cdre. F. P. Scourse is promoted Rear-Admiral and becomes Director General Surface Ships in April. **Capt. D. A. J. Blackburn** is also promoted Rear-Admiral and becomes Head of the British Defence Staff Washington in April. Other appointments include:

Cdr C. M. Crawford, Collingwood in command, Jan 13.
Capt. J. J. Brecknell, HMS Centurion as DNPS.
Surg. Capt. D. M. Crean, Institute of Naval Medicine Alverstoke as Medical Officer in Charge, July 19.
Capt. R. F. Strange, HMS Dolphin as Captain, Jan 11.
Cdr I. R. Hewitt, HMS Neptune as CSST, March 1.
Cdr I. H. Richards, Repulse (Stbd) in command Jan. 25.
Lt Col R. P. W. Wilsey, Commachio Group RM in command, March 18.
Lt Cdr M. D. Kent, Leeds Castle in command, June 7.

Lt Cdr R. C. Beveridge, Inskip in command, April 29.
Lt Cdr M. Boland, Flight Training Group (Osprey) in command, May 2.
Lt Cdr J. H. Stanford, Cattistock in command, March 15.
Lt Cdr M. E. Finney, Ledbury in command, March 8.
Lt D. J. Bryant, Ranger in command April 5.
Lt R. M. M. J. Harvey, Spey in command July 20.
Lt Cdr C. J. Lade, Middleton in command May 31.
Lt Cdr K. B. Franks, HMS Puncher in command April 8.

Deaths

Mne K. Dickson, 42 Cdo RM, Nov 23.
POMEM(M) S. H. Hyde, HMS Brinton, Nov 28.
PO(D) J. E. German, HMS Ledbury, Nov 23.

Capt. J. A. Burnett, Ships include HMS Berwick and Victorious. Mentioned in Despatches. Head of RN School of Meteorology 1950-51. Director Naval Weather Service and ADC to The Queen 1959-62. Aged 84.

F. Fancett, ex-L.S. Ships include HMS Hasty, Decoy and Ramillies. Played RN football.

K. J. Wollen, ex-CPOSA. Ships include HMS Albion, Ark Royal, Londonderry and Bulwark.

H. Bow, ex-RN Shipwright. Served 1923-45. Ships include HMS Assistance, Iron Duke, Champion, Resource, Pangbourne, Nelson, Manchester, and Dido. Aged 90.
C. E. Robins, ex-AB RNR. Served 1935-50. Ships include HMS Wren, and Ulster Queen. Member Burma Star Association. Aged 81.

L. Colley, ex-PO gunnery instructor. HMS Verulam.

A. A. Shuttleworth DSC, Commd Gnr 1939-42. Member of the Penelope Association.

Lt Cdr D. A. C. Poole, MBE, Display Control Officer with Director of Naval Recruiting. Aged 54.

J. J. Perriman, DSM, ex-Chief Tel. HMS Cleopatra. Aged 88.

J. M. Molloy, BEM, ex-CPO. Served 1937-74, including HMS Maori, Orion, Minstrel, Gambia, St James and Vidal. Aged 71.

F. B. Le Mage, ex-CPO TAS 'I'. Served 1927-52 in HMS Rowena, London, Pluto, Mary Rose. Aged 82.

J. Morris, ex-CRS. Served 1943-72. Ships include HMS Duke of York, Loch Insh, Ocean, Cumberland, Eagle, Dundas, and HMS Arethusa.

SA Tucker, NCG Portsmouth ext. 25014, drafted HMS Sheffield in April. Will swap for any Portsmouth ship, deploying or not.

LWEM(O) Dudley, DRSO Portsmouth naval base ext. 22490 or 0705 831417, drafted HMS Southampton in July (internal Comms POWEMS billet). Will consider any swap.

LCK Wilkinson, HMS Dolphin, Wardroom galley ext. 41209. Will swap for any Plymouth shore base, RM barracks included, or any drafts in the south west.

WEM(O) J. Walsh, HMS Collingwood ext. 482. Will consider any Plymouth or Portsmouth sea draft.

AEM(AE) French, 706 Sqn, RN air station Culdrose ext. 2514. Will swap for any Yeovil-based second front line rotary wing squadron.

WEM(O) J. Hollis, HMS Iron Duke. Will swap for any Plymouth-based ship, not deploying.

WEM(R) J. Woulfe, 3M2 Mess HMS Fearless 0705 822351, drafted FMRO Portsmouth in Jan. Will swap for any Northwood/Whitehead Concentre.

STD Guiver, 4F1 Mess HMS Fearless. Will swap for any Devonport-based ship or squadron.

LWTR Magan, SM2 UPO HMS Drake ext. 68051. Will swap for any Portsmouth or Portland draft.

LS(SEA) King, 3K Mess HMS Montrose. Will swap for any Rosyth draft.

WSA Holmes, Scale A Sea-going BRT Office, HMS Neptune ext. 3363. Will swap for any Portsmouth or surrounding area draft.

LWEM(O) Wright, HMS Scylla, drafted NP2010 in April. Will consider any south coast draft.

LCK Wellman-Riggs, HMS Iron Duke. Will consider any Portsmouth-based ship, deploying or not.

LMEM(L) Wookley, HMS Alacrity, ext. 53200, drafted HMS Blazer in May. Will swap for any Devonport sea draft, preferably not deploying.

LWRO(U) Monkcom, HMS Neptune Ops ext. 6310. Will swap for any south of England billet.

LWRN(R) McCowen, HMS Dryad ext. 4695, drafted HMS Dryad Feb 94. Will swap for any shore establishment.

LAEM Morton, HMS Gannet ext. 237, drafted 800 Sqn Yeovilton in May. Will swap for 819 Sqn Prestwick for LAEM(M).

WEM(O) J. Dunphy, Seawolf Building, HMS Collingwood ext. 646/649. Will swap for any Plymouth shore base.

Promotions to Chief

AUTHORITY for promotion of the following ratings to chief petty officer was issued by HMS Centurion in December:

OPERATIONS BRANCH (SEAMAN GROUP)
To CPO(OP)(R) — L. C. Allan (Dryad); K. R. Barnard (Dryad).

To CPO(MW)(O) — R. T. Darge (CWTA Portsmouth).

(COMMUNICATIONS GROUP)
To CPOCY — J. A. Heighton (Argyll).
To CCCT(L) — P. A. Lockhart (SCU Leydene).

SUPPLY AND SECRETARIAT
To CPOSA — J. A. Tubb (Brazen).

SUBMARINE SERVICE
To CPO(SSM)(O) — D. C. Hare (FOSM Northwood).
To CPOSA — J. M. Barr (Triumph).

FEMALE BRANCHES
To CWWTR(G) — S. Tarabella (MOD DOWNS).

To CWETS — V. Bonnett (Dolphin).
To CWWA — M. Wallace (Collingwood).

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER ARTIFICER
HMS Centurion has been notified of the following promotions to chief petty officer artificer which were made by commanding officers in November:

ACPOCT(L) — J. M. Taylor (Boxer).
CPOMEA — D. Baker (Newcastle), G. C. Carscadden (Nelson), P. D. Kelly (Sultan), S. D. McGowan (Tireless).

ACPOMEA — A. Clemmit (Lancaster), S. B. Elliott (Resolution Port), P. Fraser (Tireless), A. F. Guest (Tireless), R. M. Harris (Sultan), B. G. Johnston (Sultan), S. Morrison (Trenchant), L. C. Stanforth (Trenchant), M. J. Varnham (Ft Eng. Ptsmth), M. C. Webb (Sultan).

ACPOAEA(WL) — P. A. Morton (801 Sqn).

CPOAEA(M) — M. K. Gordon (829 Ft 221), P. R. Lake (Osprey), K. A. Lawson (DGA(N), MASU), S. C. Mitchell (DGA(N), MASU), M. B. Rogers (DGA(N) MASU).

CPOAEA(R) — D. N. Hardy-Hodgson (Daedalus).

ACPOAEA(R) — M. W. Bowman (829 Ft 212).

CPOWEA — P. W. Alberts (Chatham), E. Buist (Resolution Stbd), R. E. Gibson (Sovereign), S. C. Welsh (CFM Rosyth).

CPOWEA — G. D. Branchett (Exeter), A. S. Marrell (Portsmouth FMRO).

ACPOMT — D. R. Carradine (Seahawk).

ACTING CHARGE CHIEF ARTIFICER
Authority was issued by HMS Centurion in December for the following ratings to be promoted to acting charge chief artificer:

ACCMEA — B. S. Roe (Sultan), D. J. Coleman (Cochrane), P. J. Holvey (Renown Stbd), A. Barr (Neptune).

ACCWEA — S. M. Watson (Dolphin), R. J. Metcalfe (Cochrane).

Capt. J. S. Clarke, former president Basingstoke. Aged 70.

R. T. Heggie, associate member Bolton. Served in DEMS. Aged 67.

B. Woolston, former secretary and chairman, Great Yarmouth. Served 23 years in Signals Branch followed by 18 years as a coastguard. Aged 73.

D. Jones, Northwich. Also member Burma Star Association.

L. Houlgrave, founder member and chairman Northwich. Member WRNS Association.

J. Brown, Leyland.

R. V. Hudson, founder member Kings Lynn. Ex-CPO RNPS, 1941-1946.

F. Thomas, founder member West Malling. Served in HMS Swiftsure. Aged 71.

R. Cant, ex-RM, Bloxwich. Aged 66.

S. Teague, Bloxwich. Aged 72.

R. Hoare, associate member Sidcup. Aged 60.

B. A. Hine, Stoke-on-Trent. Aged 70.

Sir Geoffrey Alan Hulton, president Bolton branch. Ex-Capt RM, served in HMS Repulse and was Japanese prisoner of war. Aged 73.

Pen Friends

READERS seeking penfriends in the Royal Navy are listed below. Any sailor who writes to an applicant must use a stamped envelope bearing the applicant's name and town. The letter should be enclosed in a second envelope addressed to "Pen Pals", Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. On receipt the replies will be redirected — but only if they have been stamped.

Kerry (17) Old Aberdeen, Scotland. **Claire** (16) Felling, Tyne & Wear. **Tricia** (26) St. Austell, Cornwall. **Natasha** (18) Torquay, Devon. **Sara** (16) Darlington, Co. Durham. **Brenda** (36) Chichester, W. Sussex. **Jenny** (24) Morpeth, Northumberland. **Angela** (27) Huntingdon, York. **Tania** (17) Betchworth, Surrey. **Abbie** (17) Darlington, Co. Durham.

Laura (16) Braunstone, Leicestershire. **Dawn** (21) Edenham-Bourne, Lincs. **Pauline** (44) Blackpool, Lancs. **Caroline** (19) Nuneaton, Warwickshire. **Lisa** (22) Chesterfield, Derbyshire. **Dawn** (30) Acomb, York. **Bev** (18) Rockferry, Birkenhead, Ann (18) Workington, Cumbria. **Lorna** (23) Rainham, Essex. **Gayle** (32) Chilton, Co. Durham.

Dawn (22) Higher Transmere, Wirral. **Chantelle** (18), Eston, Middlesbrough. **Sarah** (27) Sherburn-in-Elmet, Leeds. **Allison** (22) Walsden, Manchester. **Cathy** (20) Wrexham, Clwyd. **Charmaine** (36) Penkthill, Stoke-on-Trent. **Michelle** (21) Basildon, Essex. **Nancy** (30) Dringlington, W. Yorkshire. **Debbie** (28) East Herrington, Sunderland. **Sarah** (19) Peterlee, Co. Durham.

Christina (26) Budleigh Salterton, Devon. **Claire** (17) Middlesbrough, Cleveland. **Sandy** (26) Hampton Hill, Middlesex. **Joanne** (19) Bolton, Lancs. **Carolyn** (23) Doncaster, S. Yorks. **Susan** (20) Budleigh Salterton, Devon. **Carole** (33) Andover, Hants. **Liz** (40) Plymouth, Devon. **Julie** (25) Runcorn, Cheshire. **Dawn** (20) Aylesbury, Bucks.

Annette (34) Stafford, Staffs. **Pam** (38) Crowe, Cheshire. **Jackie** (27) Teddington, Middlesex. **Sharon** (26) Lytham St. Annes, Lancashire. **Sue** (39) Nottingham, Fiona (21) Preston, Lancs. **Tina** (23) Huyton, Liverpool. **Nikki** (26) Basingstoke, Hants. **Jane** (21) Leeds, Yorkshire. **Mandy** (16) Workington, Cumbria.

Steph (26) Acomb, York. **Janette** (19) Salford. **Gale** (28) Leeds. **Sue** (28) Ashbourne, Derbyshire. **Janice** (21) Murton, Co. Durham. **Lucy** (18) Bradford, W. Yorkshire. **Nicola** (26) Bacup, Lancs. **Paula** (36) Havant, Hampshire. **Kay** (26) Aylesford, Kent. **Mandie** (27) Sydenham, London.

Jeanette (40) Torquay, S. Devon. **Tracy** (23) Dewsbury, W. Yorkshire. **Melanie** (25) Littlehampton, W. Sussex. **Sarah** (22) Penge, London. **Ann** (42) London. **Pat** (46) Otley, W. Yorkshire. **Pauline** (29) Maidstone, Kent. **Zoe** (20) Telford, Shropshire. **Linda** (33) St. Albans, Herts. **Melanie** (22) Durham.

Rachel (15) Otley, W. Yorkshire. **Nicola** (36) Worle, Avon. **Lisa** (18) Rotherham, S. Yorkshire. **Jill** (16) Baildon, Herts. **Wendy** (26) West Drayton, Middlesex. **Shirley** (42) Rossendale. **Sharon** (25) Manchester. **Anne** (35) Bakewell, Derbyshire. **Jackie** (26) Halebank Widnes, Cheshire. **Karen** (24) Tonbridge, Kent.

Carole (23) Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. **Lovene** (18) Newport, Isle of Wight. **Margaret** (43) North Hykeham, Lincoln. **Miss S.** (21) Darlington, Co. Durham. **Clare** (17) Eastwood, Nottingham. **Lillane** (48) Torquay, S. Devon. **Joan** (44) Morley, Leeds. **Suzanne** (33) Darlington, Co. Durham. **Sharon** (18) Crook, Co. Durham. **Jill** (28) Newton Abbot, S. Devon.

Jean (29) Brierley Hill, West Midlands. **Sam** (19) Ilkeston, Derbyshire. **Julie** (20) Rustington, Sussex. **Hailey** (17) Wehyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. **Christina** (32) Warminster, Wiltshire. **Beryl** (36) Walton, Liverpool. **Nicola** (17) Grimsby, South Humberside. **Sharon** (26) Barton-on-Humber, S. Humberside. **Alison** (21) Blackpool, Lancs. **Charlotte** (24) Bishops Waltham, Southampton.

IN MEMORIAM

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Santa drops in

PICTURED abseiling from the roof of Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, is Santa, otherwise known as Lt Cdr Charlie Wilson, the CO of HMS Inverness.

Along with other members of the ship's company he was visiting children on the Rainbow Ward (see story page 13).



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PARADE IS HAILED AS 'ONE OF TOWN'S MOST IMPRESSIVE'

Brecon freedom march

HMS BRECON drew the crowds when she received the Freedom of Brecon in what the local press described as one of the most impressive military parades in the history of the Welsh town.

The entire ship's company of the mincruiser — refitting in Rosyth — marched through Brecon in company with the Royal Marines Band of Commander-in-Chief Fleet and contingents from the three other military units which hold the Freedom of the town — the Parachute Regiment, the Gurkhas and the Royal Regiment of Wales.

In the town centre the parade was inspected by the Mayor of Brecon, Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Hughes, who at the civic reception which followed presented the Freedom Scroll to the ship's commanding officer, Lt Cdr the Hon. Michael Cochrane. In

return he presented to the town a painting of the ship and St Helena postage stamps which feature the vessel.

Also present were shipmates from the wartime HMS Brecon, a Hunt-class destroyer, who presented the town with an ensign she wore during her eventful service in 1942-45.

In the evening Lt Cdr Cochrane hosted a reception at a local hotel. Guests included the Mayor, the Bishop of Brecon and Swansea, and the Lord Lieutenant of Powys, Mr Mervyn Bourdillon.

Other events included morning service at Brecon Cathedral, which this year celebrates its 900th anniversary, and a rugby match between a ship's XV and Brecon RFC.

RIGHT: The Mayor of Brecon, Mrs Elizabeth Hughes, inspects HMS Brecon's ship's company during the Freedom parade. BELOW RIGHT: The scene in the town square.

BELOW: The ship's company, led by the executive officer, Lt Darroch Woodward, exercise their new right to march through Brecon with fixed bayonets and colours flying.

PO(Phot) Dizzy De Silva



Charity bid to save islands

A NEW charity has been set up to encourage conservation and research in the islands and reefs around the Indian Ocean Island of Diego Garcia.

With Cdr. Richard Martin as secretary the "Friends of the Chagos" are seeking to attract members from among the Royal Naval personnel who have served in the Diego Garcia based Naval Party 1002.

Diego Garcia is part of the Chagos Archipelago which includes 50 islands only one of which (Diego Garcia) is inhabited. The Friends say islands provide a superb, protected habitat for turtles, coconut crabs and a mass of reef life which is inherently fragile.

'In danger'

The natural history of the archipelago was studied by a series of Joint Services expeditions in the 1970s and the historical and cultural remains were assessed in detail last year under the auspices of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

"Such studies have shown that what remains is in danger of being lost forever," say the Friends of the Chagos. "If we care about it we must take further action now."

Further information is available from Cdr. Martin on 0329 231168.

Rod's cycles go on show

VETERAN cycles from the collection of Lt Cdr Rod Safe RN (ret'd) are featured in a new exhibition at Portsmouth City Museum.

Rod, of Solent Veteran Cycle Club, is a former commanding officer of the RN Photographic Branch, and his comprehensive collection has been added to those of the city's museums to mount a display spanning 150 years of cycling history.

The exhibition is open daily from 10.30 to 5.30 until January 29.

Explorers hot on the trail

A TEAM of Royal Navy explorers have returned to UK after a trial-blazing journey across the Sahara via one of the loneliest routes in the desert.

Their scientific expedition "Oasis 93" comprised six officers from the RN Engineering College Manadon supported by an Army doctor, a Territorial Army nurse, two REME mechanics and a two-man civilian film crew.

Ambitious

It was the largest Service venture to the region for 23 years and hailed as the most ambitious adventure training project ever undertaken by an RN group. It was also, they say, the first cross-country transit of the Sahara during the heat of summer — with temperatures up to 135 degrees F.

Leader of the expedition, S/Lt Matthew Bird, told Navy News that the team believe they experienced the highest temperature in the shade ever recorded on earth during their two-week crossing of the Empty Quarter of Mauritania. Unfortunately they could not prove a higher temperature than the record high of 58 degrees C — as their ther-

момeters exploded!

But, "By far the most unpleasant climatic condition was the frequent sandstorms. These could materialise very rapidly with conditions degrading from a haze on the horizon to almost zero visibility within about 15 minutes."

Oasis 93 used two trucks and a Land-Rover on a route followed long ago by camel trains and punctuated by abandoned Foreign Legion forts. Satellite navigation and communication equipment

was supplemented by long and short range radio.

Destination for the team was Dakar, Senegal, by which time Oasis 93 had conducted important research projects including the effect of extreme heat on personnel, and satellite imagery calibration for the Defence Research Agency.

Besides S/Lt Bird, other naval members of the expedition were S/Lts James Phillips, Jon Boyle, Bob Bowman, Chris Carlisle and Thane Hall.



ABOVE: In the wilderness . . . razor-sharp rocks were one of the hazards faced by the expedition's vehicles.

LEFT: Not a mirage, but a pool in the desert left after a storm. S/Lts Matt Bird and Jon Boyle, in temperatures of up to 135 degrees F, wallow in the windfall as if the warm, muddy hole was a cool mountain stream.

Hong Kong takes honours at Salon Culinaire



LEFT: Enter the dragon... This work in fat by POCK Eddie Leung (on the right) helped towards HMS Tamar's six gold medals. The sculpture is admired by Eddie's colleague CPOCK David Yim who won a bronze medal for his yeast work. ABOVE: No lack of service for CPOCK Derek Beesley. His attendants are (from left) silver medallist WSTD Korena James; Young Steward of the Year WSTD Karen De-Ridder; silver medallist STD Nicola Beeling; and STD Andy Hall.

SIX GOLD medals brought the Hong Kong establishment HMS Tamar top honours at the 10th Royal Navy Salon Culinaire.

Held over two days in HMS Nelson, the Navy's premiere culinary competition drew entries from 24 shore establishments, four ships, a submarine and a team from the Royal Marines.

Tamar's tour de force also netted them two silver and five bronze medals. Hard on their heels came HMS Illustrious whose entrants won five gold medals, four silver and three bronze.

Award for the best overall performance (Prix d'Honneur) went to CK Anthony Spreadborough of HMS Osprey, winner of the Young Cook of the Year title.

Other top awards went to WSTD Karen De-Ridder of FONA (Young Steward of the Year), CK Mark Wilson of FO Portsmouth staff (Leading Cook of the Year), LCK Geoff Gillet of HMS Wilton and WSTD Ursula Ball of Chequers (joint Cook and Serve winners) and CK David Wilkins of HMS Illustrious (Naafi Cup for best junior entry).

Presentations were made by

Rear Admiral Nicholas Wilkinson, Director Naval Personal Services and Chief Naval Supply and Secretariat Officer. Guest of honour for the first day was Brigadier James Rucker, Managing Director of Naafi, and for the second day was Sir Nicholas Ions MP, Chairman of the Commons Select Committee on Defence. Chairman of the judges, Mr Brian Jones, is senior instructed officer at the RN Cookery School. He said he was impressed with the standards achieved and by the efforts to support the competition despite heavy demands on manpower.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Slinger Wood, Tony Power and Terry Seward.

Golden feast for Tamar

Results

Medal winners were (1 = gold medal, 2 = silver, 3 = bronze):

Junior omelette — 1 STD Leung (Tamar), 2 Mr Kemp (BRNC), 3 CK Martin (Raleigh).

Leading Cook of the Year — 1 CK Wilson (FO Portsmouth), 2 LCK Smith (Cochrane), 3 Not awarded. Young Cook of the Year — 1 CK Spreadborough (Osprey), 2 Mne Miner (Lymington), 3 CK Bold & CK Newton (Nelson).

Open Cook and Serve — 1 LCK Gillet (HMS Wilton) & WSTD Ball (Chequers) jointly with LCK Wong & LSTD Chu (Tamar), 2 Not awarded, 3 STD McGill & CK Boot (Neptune).

Junior Hot Pasta — 1 Not awarded, 2 Mr Kemp (BRNC), 3 CK Healey (Sultan). Supply Officers Event — 1 Cdr Whitaker (Raleigh), 2 Lt Cdr Hattersley (Fearless) & Cdr Barge (Dryad), 3 Lt Cdr Hayward (York). Young Steward of the Year — 1 WSTD De-Ridder (FONA), 2 STD Bealing (FOSNI) and STD James (FO Plymouth), 3 Not awarded.

Table d'Honneur — Gold to Mr Jones (Daedalus), CPOCKs Vadis & Brown (Illustrious), POCA Hancock (Sultan), Sgt Bentley & WO2 Roberts (RM Lymington). Senior Works in Chocolate — 1 Not awarded, 2 POCK Cullen (FOSF), 3 Not awarded. Junior Celebration Cake Royal Icing — 1 & 2 Not awarded, 3 Miss Spencer (Collingwood). Senior Celebration Cake Royal Icing — 1 Not awarded, 2 Cpl Green (RM Lymington), 3 Sgt Mead-Male & C/Sgt Evans (RM Lymington). Junior Celebration Cake Sugar Paste — 1 Not awarded, 2 Mne Sweeney (RM Lymington) & CK Phillips (Ark Royal), 3 Not awarded.

Yeast work

Senior celebration sugar paste — 1 CK Potts (Illustrious), 2 Not awarded, 3 Mr Diment (Daedalus), Sgt Mead-Male (RM Lymington) & LCK Burtinshaw (Dolphin). Junior decorated gateaux — 1 Not awarded, 2 CK Kelly (Dryad) & CK Run-kee (FO Portsmouth), 3 CK Bird (Raleigh). Senior decorated torte — 1 Not awarded, 2 CK Pearson (Defiance), 3 CK Jackson & LCK Martin (Illustrious).

Junior yeast work — 1 Not awarded, 2 CKs Kwok (Tamar), Sammons (Dolphin), Kershaw (Drake), 3 CK Ward (Nelson). Senior yeast work — 1 Not awarded, 2 POCK Sanderson & CK Gentry (Victorious), 3 CPOCK Yim & POCK Leung (Tamar).

Junior cold sweet — 1 Not awarded, 2 CK Hsieh (Neptune), 3 CK Walters (Gannet). Senior cold sweet — 1 & 2 Not awarded, 3 CK Jowett (Illustrious).

Junior cold buffet — 1 CK Smith (Illustrious), 2 Not awarded, 3 CK Jeffries (Ark Royal) & CK Hall (Sultan). Senior cold platter (meat) — 1 & 3 Not awarded, 2 LCK Wye (Illustrious). Junior cold buffet — 1 Not awarded, 2 CK Peglar (Illustrious), 3 CK McLoughlin (Ark Royal). Senior cold platter (game) — 1 Not awarded, 2 LCK Brogden (Illustrious), 3 Cpl Green (RM Lymington). Junior cold buffet (fish) — 1 CK Wilkins (Illustrious), 2 CK Spencer (Ark Royal), 3 CK Codling

(Dryad). Senior show platter (fish) — 1 LCK Barnett (Sultan), 2 Sgt Bentley (Lymington), 3 L/Cpl Barker (RM Lymington) & LCK Chow (Tamar).

Junior cold buffet (poultry) — 1 Not awarded, 2 CK Roughley (Sultan), 3 CK White (Sultan). Senior cold platter (poultry) — 1 LCK Lawrence (Illustrious), 2 Not awarded, 3 Mne Curwood (RM Lymington).

Junior Danish open sandwich — 1 & 2 Not awarded, 3 STD Leung (Tamar). Senior Danish open sandwich — 1 STD Poon (Tamar), 2 & 3 Not awarded. Junior packed meal and napkin fold — 1 & 2 Not awarded, 3 Miss Lyddon (BRNC) & Std Hale (Seahawk). Senior packed meal and napkin fold — 1 Mrs Coleman (BRNC), 2 STD Poon (Tamar), 3 Mrs Fields (Sultan) & LSTD Chu (Tamar).

Junior works in fat — 1 CK Kwok (Tamar), 2 CK Postello (Nelson), 3 Not awarded. Senior works in fat — 1 POCK Leung (Tamar) & CPOSTD Mitchell (Nelson), 2 POCK Oatway (York), 3 Not awarded. Senior plated four-course — 1 Not awarded, 2 POCK Lennard (Illustrious), 3 Sgt Bentley (RM Lymington).



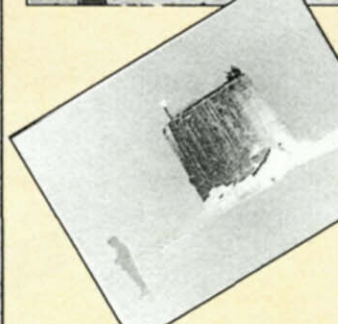
Pancake acrobatics from Lt Cdr Peter Hayward of HMS York who won a bronze medal in the supply officers' event.



CK David Wilkins shows off his gold medal and cold fish platter which won him the title of best junior overall.

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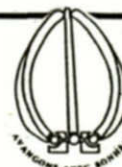
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ALL BLACKS' WHITEWASH THWARTED BY SERVICES

THE Leprechaun wishes all our rugby readers and players a very successful 1994, particularly the RN representative side as they progress towards the Inter Service matches (26 Mar v Army) and (13 Apr v RAF). The recent promise to report this month on the RN v Hampshire November fixture cannot be fulfilled as it was postponed due to a frost-hard pitch, and then cancelled altogether despite the valiant efforts of Harry Brickwood (Sec. RNRU) to arrange a new date.

However, many of you will have been lucky enough to see the Combined Services v All Blacks' match at a packed (6,000 spectators) Devonport Services ground, The Rectory, where the CS team played out of their skins to frustrate the many All Blacks attempts to notch up a big score. There were few spectators, pundits or reporters present who could have hoped for such a low score against the CS team but as the national press declared, this was an outstanding display in restricting the All Blacks team to a 13-3 win.

It was all the more ironic, therefore, that these laudable press comments followed months of sniping that the Combined Services did not deserve this fixture because they did not have a good enough team. On this occasion Dave Sibson and Bob Armstrong were the only Navy players on the field, with Cass Clay and Corin Palmer on the replacements bench. The whole event, however, had a very definite RN flavour because the pre-match events, game and



Sgt Steve Worrall RAF (captain) makes the tackle. AB Dave Sibson RN looks on intently.

Picture: PO(Phot) Kev Preece.

post-match arrangements were so well organised — they would be — by the Senior Service.

It was great to see the Rectory full to overflowing and to observe the many recent changes and enhancements to the stands, railings, lighting, stairways and particularly the excellent playing surface, the result of a newly-installed under pitch drainage system put in last October by groundsmen Colin Williams.

The fight for the Rectory to get this All Blacks fixture was pursued over three years, principally by Captain (now Commodore) Mike Thomas during his tenure as Chairman of Devonport Services RFC. Also of critical importance was sponsorship for the match and this was generously provided by Bain Clarkson Ltd. and AIG

Europe (UK) Ltd., who produce PAX + insurance for the three Services.

All in Plymouth involved in the organisation of this game at the Rectory, and for the post-match players and officials dinner in Drake, will be aware that there is one name that continually crops up. On behalf of the RNRU Executive Committee, therefore, the Chairman (Captain Tony Hallett) has asked *Leprechaun* to mention the heartfelt appreciation and thanks of everyone in Navy rugby to Lt.-Cdr. Rob Nairn (HMS Defiance) for his tireless efforts over the past three years, not only for his work towards the refurbishment of the Rectory but principally his outstanding achievements in making the match arrangements for November 30 such a

tremendous success. Through his personal endeavours he has earned much kudos for Devonport Services RFC, the RNRU and the CSRFC. Finally, let us all hope that it will not be another 58 years before an All Blacks touring side appears there again.

On December 8, after some 30 ships/establishments had contested many hard matches during the season, RM Plymouth met HMS Heron at Burnaby Road in the final of the Lambs Navy Rum Knockout cup. Both teams were well cheered on by their supporters on a day when open rugby was committed to the mud in a gale-force wind and frequent downpours of rain. The First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Benjamin Bathurst, was met on arrival at the ground by Lt.-Col.



First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Benjamin Bathurst, presents the Lambs Navy Cup to WO2 Roger Tinson, captain of the winning RM Plymouth rugby team.

Picture: David Streten, Portsmouth

John Davis RM (Chairman Knockout Cup Competition) who also hosted COMUKTG and the President RNRU (Rear-Admiral Gretton), CGRM (Lt. Gen. Ross) and FONA (Rear-Admiral Garnett).

The match itself was a hard-fought forwards' battle and initially it looked as though the Royals would win comfortably. In the first half the RMs had wind advantage and Ian Verner kicked two penalty goals with the captain, Roger Tinson, subsequently going over the line for an unconverted try. Undaunted, Heron played hard against the wind and scored when scrum-half Jones pounced over the line after an untidy line-out produced a loose ball.

The start of the second half witnessed some penetrating runs from the RMs forwards and backs and resulted in a push over try by No. 8 Mark

Hewitt from a quickly taken tapped penalty. With the score then at 16-5 Heron went on to the attack and 12 minutes before time Mo Morris scored and converted a try to bring his team within winning distance.

It was strange however that throughout the game, when each side had wind advantage, they did not try to exploit the strong wind to test the opposing full backs with a series of 'up and under' kicks, but preferred instead to keep the ball in the forwards. The RM Plymouth impressed in this department and on balance ran out as worthy winners (16-12) for their first Navy Cup, despite the conditions. The cup was presented to the winning captain by Admiral Bathurst.

Coming fixtures: 11 Jan, RN v Exeter at Exeter KO 1930; 19 Jan, RN v Oxford University at Burnaby Road KO 1800; 26 Jan, RN v Cambridge University at Cambridge KO 1430; 2 Feb, RN v Redruth at The Rectory KO 1915.



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HILL TOPS

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Outstanding doubles pairing of the competition was the Scotland/Devonport partnership of LPT Steve Losh (Neptune) and MEM Ian Shore (Raleigh), who won all nine of their games. For the Royal Marines Capt. John Edwards and Mne George Glasscock (both Lympstone) won eight.

FAA veteran CPO Ted Hill (Daedalus) dominated the singles, winning his six matches. The equally experienced WO Richard Wiseman (Collingwood) won five.

Special newcomers' awards were made to Scotland's doubles pair RO1 Gary Richardson and WTR Calum Mckenzie and to singles player AEM Laurence Seaman (Heron).

The RN Individual Badminton Championships will be held at Sultan on February 2, 3 and 4. Contact local PT Offices for details.



Sport



Vlad the pursuer

THE COMBINED Services Boxing Association team went down 5-2 at HMS Nelson to a very strong Russian Armed Forces team comprised almost entirely of internationals, writes CSgt Leo Toms.

The three Royal Navy representatives all lost — in various ways. LPT Dale Randle (Osprey) took on Pte Vlasov, a European bronze medalist this year, but after a bright start received a savage left hook to the body. This doubled Randle up and he was counted out by the Russian referee.

Hardest bout of the evening's boxing was Mne Trevor French's (CTCRM) encounter with WO Vladislav Romanov, the Russian welterweight champion. After an even first round, French rallied in the second to push the Russian

boxer back on his heels continually and won the bout.

The third saw the boxers standing toe-to-toe swapping punches until the final bell. Romanov received the unanimous verdict of the judges.

Mne Kevin McCormack (45 Cdo) was the unluckiest boxer. After only two minutes of an evenly-fought first round WO Alexei Liezen, World Championship representative, delivered a wicked left cross counter to inflict a cut under McCormack's left eye. The referee immediately stepped in and stopped the bout, with the RN

boxer unable to carry on.

Only one of the three other RN boxers managed a win in supporting bouts. Results: Mne P. Murphy (45 Cdo) beat SAC J. Metcalf (RAF) on points. Mne C. Baird (45 Cdo) lost to LCpl V. Powell (Army) rtd 3. LPT D. Machin (Sultan) lost to Pte Short (Army) pts.

Left: Mne Trevor French (left) in a close encounter with bruising Russian champion, Vlad Romanov.

Picture: The News, Portsmouth.

BINKS CLINCHES SECOND PORTSMOUTH VICTORY

FOURTH of four was the disappointing result for the Navy squash team in their annual quadrangular match against the Police (to whom they lost 5-0), the Army (4-1) and the Fire Service (4-1). Only RN winners were Lt Robin Young (Whale Island) and Lt-Cdr Alex Johnstone (HQRN).

Both also played their part in the Navy's 4-1 win against the RAC. POPT Ian Binks (RNSLAM) and Sub Lt Martin Jukes (Manadon) also won.

The Escorts Diamond Jubilee Tournament at Eton College saw the RN go down 6-0 to an Oxbridge team, 4-2 to Escorts, and 5-1 to Escorts II. They drew 3-3 with South African Escorts, however, and beat Eton Past and Present 4-2.

This year's Combined Services Individual Championships were hosted by the RAF and staged at HMS Temeraire. Young performed best for the Navy in the senior event, finishing fourth, while LWTR Jason Youdale (Neptune) was fourth at U25. In the veterans' competition Johnstone was runner-up and WOPT Nobby Hall (Nottingham Careers) was third.

HMS Collingwood hosted the Inter-Command Championships and in a repeat of last year, Portsmouth met the Royal Marines in the final. The score stood at two matches apiece and the match was to be decided by Binks for Portsmouth and Johnstone for the Royals.

From being 2-0 down Binks fought back to win the match 3-2 (10-8 in the final game), snatching a second victory in succession for Pompey.

Also representing Portsmouth were Young, LS Andy Owen (Gunwharf), Lt-Cdr Mike Farrage (Greenwich), Hall, and Lt-Cdr Nick Alves (Centurion).

There to present the trophy to Portsmouth and team captain Ian Binks was Maj Gen Andrew Keeling (President of RN squash), who in his younger days had enjoyed many a close battle on the squash court with Ian's father, ex-CPO Joe Binks, Staff PTI. Joe was the first member of the lower deck to represent the Royal Navy at hockey and squash.

AIR COMMAND MAINTAIN VOLLEYBALL SUCCESS

AFTER promotion to Division 3 (South) at the end of last season, the RN senior volleyball team started the '93/'94 campaign steadily. First match produced a good, 3 sets to 2 win against Priory.

The jubilation was quickly followed, though, by a shock defeat by the weaker Sussex Nomads (3-1). Honours were shared at Barnstable, where the RN comfortably beat Lovell Westward, but suffered a 3-0 pasting at the hands of high fliers, Egham.

Despite playing at home, the sailors were then beaten by Solent and Spark Jennings, but the next match, at Weymouth, saw an outstanding performance by the Royal Navy and a result of 3-0 in 55 minutes!

Solent, unbeaten and favourites for promotion, were then to be played again. The plucky RN team took a shock lead in the first set after some excellent play and deft touches by setter Alan Blenkhorn. However Solent hit back and the RN crumbled under the pressure to end up the wrong side of a 3-1 result.

Camden came next and the match was played for double points as they had failed to show at Weymouth. Despite being bottom of the table, they forced the match to five sets, with the RN stealing the points by 3-2.

The Navy is lying sixth almost halfway through the season and coach Steve Glennon is more than happy with the results to date. He is convinced his squad will achieve this season's aim — to retain their place in Division 3 and, perhaps, surprise a few teams in the process.

At Unit level, the 1993 Challenge Cup was held at HMS Nelson and 11 teams competed. Neptune squashed a much depleted Collingwood team 3-1 in the first semi-final, and the strong Daedalus side saw off cup-holders Seahawk (3-0) in the other.

What on paper and previous performances looked likely to be a tremendous final saw Daedalus win 3-0 to keep the trophy within the grip of the Fleet Air Arm. Air Command were also represented by Gannet and Heron in the plate final, which Gannet won 3-0.

IF IT AIN'T BROKE DON'T FIX IT!

THE Royal Navy soccer team went into their game against the Amateur Football Alliance at Burnaby Road having won their four opening games quite comfortably, writes POPT Vic Jones.

On a cold and blustery afternoon, both teams struggled to provide an entertaining game, although the Navy came close in the first 20 minutes.

LPT I. Smith (Illustrious) opened the scoring after good work by LAEM Nigel Thwaites (Culdrose), who worked his way down the left, passing to Smith, who scored at the second attempt.

Five changes were made at half time, which perhaps was the Navy's undoing. LPT Fraser Quirke (Nelson) twice went close and should have done better. The AFA's play improved as the RN lost their way and it was no surprise when they equalised midway through the second half, and eventually scored again to win 2-1.

The Navy's match against the Isle of Wight FA was cancelled due to the pitch being waterlogged.

January fixtures: 11th, CSFA v FA at Worksop Town, ko 1930; 19th, RNFA v Civil Service at Chiswick, ko 1415; 26th, RNFA v HM Prison Service at Newbold Revel, ko 1400.

EVENTFUL SEASON

THE eventing and hunter trial season is now in full swing with the Royal Navy and Royal Marines being represented at military events across the country.

A One Day Event consists of three phases: dressage, show jumping and a demanding cross country course. Penalties are given in all three and the lowest score wins. To be placed a competitor must be above average in all three phases. A Hunter Trial is cross country with a time limit and can involve opening and closing gates and obstacles which need to be thought out.

At the Waynfleet One Day Event the RN/RM was represented by Cdr Richard Brides, Cpl Butch Bustany, Lt-Cdr Richard Randall, Wren Donna Jenkin, Cpl Terry Coleman and CPO Pete Ogburn. This was an individual event which provided some very good dressage scores by Henry Vajar, Maybelle and Kipling. Unfortunately Kipling could not keep up the good work and a nasty accident occurred in the showjumping, although he and Coleman walked away with a few bruises.

Maybelle (Randall) was the most consistent in the jumping phases and gained a ninth overall with Henry Vajar (Bridges) seventh due to an above average dressage score but one fence down in the showjumping. The going was very wet underfoot and the whole event was a test of the riders' and horses' courage over big fences.

The RAF Championships at Cranwell saw Jenkin, Ogburn, Coleman and Wren Tammy Vaughan all competing on new ground. Bustany, as the Chef d'Equipe, kept the squad's morale high, especially when the young team realised they

were up against over 80 competitors and 14 teams. All four are to be credited for their performance, with three ending on dressage penalties only, clear rounds in the cross country and showjumping phases boosted confidence and hopes. A good third place in the team event ensued, with Donna gaining an individual fifth prize.

Melton Mowbray

A week later the team took part in the Army One Day Event at Melton Mowbray. The dressage was judged critically as the Army Advanced Riding Course was also competing. Our team of Randall, Bustany, Mne Howard Wood and Ogburn all received average dressage scores. Only Maybelle and Richard performed a clear round in both the cross country and dressage, gaining them sixth position overall.

With three classes for competitors at RSA Larkhill's Hunter Trial, the RN/RM team arrived ten-strong with LWren Fay Butler RNR and Wood competing Hors Concours (non competitive) due to their horses' substantial winnings in show jumping events. The team gave a good performance with six horses gaining clear rounds, including Wren Tammy Vaughan on the indomitable Crest of the Wave winning the RN Trophy.

The Intermediate and Open Events included Bridges on Henry Vajar and the ever-improving Maybelle, ridden by Randall. The course was more

technical for this class and the fences were larger. Creditably, Henry Vajar was sixth with Maybelle just behind in seventh place. The Open class saw our only entry (Maybelle) being placed fifth against opposition from the Army who are regular competitors in Advanced British Horse Society Events throughout the country.

Cdr and Mrs Bridges joined forces for the Pairs Event, both giving clear rounds and gaining a second rosette. Ogburn and Jenkin were seventh by only 0.12sec, showing the speed and dexterity with which many of these horses were completing the cross country course.

At the Kings Troop Winter Show, a two-day show with every jump being placed at maximum height (4'9", 5'3"), Howard Wood on his own Jamin, was placed second in the Open Top Score class. Fay Butler on Jack of Diamonds came close to a rosette in the same class but unfortunately dislodged the joker fence which put her down the running. Everyone agreed that after jumping such big fences the smaller ones would hold no fear for next season!

For anyone interested in gaining a place in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Show Jumping and Eventing Squad, a structured training programme will take place at Norton Manor Camp from Monday, January 31, to Friday, February 11, 1994. Week One is for all-comers, whereas Week Two will be reserved for riders in the top ten ranking positions for 1993 plus those who have shown potential. The instructors will be Aart Noordijk BHSI and WO2 Kevin Woods RHA. If any prospective rider (with or without a horse) is interested he/she should contact Lt Cdr Randall (Manadon ext 81461) or POWren Isaacs (CTCRM ext 232) for an application form and questionnaire.

Oldies but goodies

NAVY Masters figure among the top masters swim teams in the country. At the second Armed Services Short Course and Masters Swimming Competition their tremendous strength in depth allowed them to dominate.

This year a trophy was awarded to the winning Service and the Navy became first holder. Almost as many swimmers turned out for the Navy as for the other two Services put together.

This was reflected in the medals: the RN took 106 gold medals to the RAF's 83 and the Army's 38. The silver tally was RN 60, RAF 32 and Army 40, and the bronze was RN 26, RAF 19 and Army 33.

Team manager Ron Kimber was loathe to mention individuals when so many contributed to the magnificent Navy medal haul, but said he was particularly pleased to have five swimmers over 70 — John Harrison (79), Edwin Francis (78), Ray Brookhouse (74), Phil Merryweather (73) and Len Audritt (71). A sixth, GB record holder Alex Laylee was away in Cyprus.

He also commented on the large number of over 25s from the RN senior team, the strong contingent brought up from Plymouth by Cpl Chris Fairey and the increased number of WRNS and ex-WRNS personnel taking part.

Following the excitement at Arborfield Garrison, a much smaller RN team competed in the ASA National Masters Championships at Sheffield. Laylee took gold for the Navy in the 100m and 200m backstroke, Merryweather in the 100m and 200m breaststroke and Cdr Ian Hughes (35-39 years) in the 100m backstroke.

Laylee also collected two silver medals, while both Hughes and Baz Blenden won bronze medals. The RN over 240 years relay teams took silver in both relays.

There must be many more RN and ex-RN swimmers around the country who could give Masters swimming a try. Contact Peter Stephens (PNB ext 8235222 or 0705 832007) or Ron Kimber (0329 281287).

RESULTS of the Inter-Services Indoor Hockey Tournament held at HMS Collingwood were as follows — seniors: 1, Army; 2, RAF; 3, Royal Navy. Under 21s: 1, Army; 2, Royal Navy; 3, RAF.

Rink of confidence

ICE hockey may not be on the list of Royal Navy sports, but for more than three years now it has been played regularly and competitively by RN personnel.

The RN Sentinels Ice Hockey Club was founded by PO-MEM(L) Manuel Wallace, a keen ice hockey player who was confident many of his fellow Servicemen would enjoy this fast, hard-hitting sport.

Nationally, the sport is gaining ground — there are several hundred teams in the UK. Viewers with cable and satellite TV can enjoy NHL ice hockey throughout the winter season.

Gosport Ice Rink is home to the Sentinels. They train there on Wednesday evenings and are currently preparing for the new season (April-September). Manager Alan Carlisle and his staff assist the team with ice time for training and games.

Last summer saw the Sentinels' first full fixture list. Opposition included the Slough Tornadoes, Vectis Warriors from the Isle of Wight, the Basingstoke Hellcats and the Brighton Royals. Sentinels won nine of their 13 games and the matches attracted good crowds.

The majority of the Sentinels' 40 listed players are Royal Navy or MOD personnel. The club also has a number of civilian guest players who help make it a force to be reckoned with.

The team's first coach, Paul Woodford, is ably assisted by local England first division player Darrin Laishley, who give their time free to bring players on from novice to competent hand.

Ice hockey is Canada's national sport and the Sentinels

are lucky enough to have their own Canadian netminder (goalie), Lt. Mike McGinley, who has also taken an active role in club management, was voted "Players' player" last year. Unfortunately for the Sentinels he is returning to Canada in the spring. They wish him well.

The team is recognised by the British Ice Hockey Association and plays in the English Recreational League. New talent — experienced or not — is always sought. The club has some equipment to lend.

So, male or female, if you are fit and determined to have a try at the world's fastest team contact sport, or if you could help with sponsorship, please telephone: Lt. Mark Walker (HMS Sultan ext 2140), Lt McGinley (Portsmouth 583380) or PO-MEM(L) Wallace (Portsmouth 873233).

Right: A face off during the Sentinels match against Fareham Wildcats.

Inset: Club founder Manuel Wallace churns up the ice.

Pictures: John MacNally, Gosport.



He sent them up to the top of the hill



GOOD OL' U.S. KNOW-HOW

THREE Americans played for Plymouth, one American for the Royal Marines and a Kiwi played for Naval Air in the Inter-Command Basketball Championships, held in HMS Heron's new recreation centre.

Initial thoughts that the Americans might prove a deciding factor for Plymouth were justified, but the other Commands put up some spirited fights. Result: 1, Plymouth; 2, Portsmouth; 3, Naval Air.

Most promising junior player was named as Lt. Jim Higham (Collingwood), while Sgt Del Catar USMC from RM Poole was adjudged the most valuable player. He scored 23 point baskets in the competition.

LT CDR The Duke of York, commanding officer of HMS Cottesmore, and POPT Doug Wylie (Rooke) act as starters for the Rock Race Run by members of the companies of HM ships Hurworth, Cattistock and Cottesmore.

The ships of MCM2 Squadron were visiting Gibraltar during their Mediterranean deployment. The race was won by AB Grassie Meadows (Cottesmore) in a time of 24 minutes and 50 seconds.

The record for the gruelling uphill run is 17 minutes 23 seconds, held by Lt Cdr Chris Robison.



Eating for Britain!

LT Steve Cockerill (Collingwood) has been selected to represent Britain in the Laser single-handed dinghy event at the Spanish Olympic Regatta taking place in Palamos, Spain, and for the American "Midwinters" Olympic Regatta, to be held in Miami.

He was chosen from over 100 top single-handed sailors in the UK to take one of the four places reserved for the British team on the strength of his performance in a series of weekend national ranking regattas over the last eight months.

Only a year ago the Laser was proving a bit of a challenge for Steve compared with the International Europe (in which he is pictured) in which he had won ten National and British Open Championships.

To become competitive in the more demanding and powerful Laser dinghy, Steve had to gain some 13 kilos in weight — which he suc-

ceeded in doing by undertaking a rigorous training and eating programme throughout the past year.

He qualified for the European Championships in July, gaining the opportunity to sail against some of the best in the world. He won two races in the regatta, coming 26th overall.

Consistent

Competing in the British Laser National and Open Championships — where opposition included New Zealanders, Canadians and South Africans — Steve sailed consistently to finish third overall.

These successes influenced the Royal Yachting Association to invite him to a number of their training seminars and camps to prepare for the 1994 European Championships. These will take place at Hayling Island next July and are a key event in Steve's preparations for the Olympic trials in September '95.

Sailing is very much a family affair for the Cockerills. Steve's wife, Anne, a Royal Navy lieutenant serving in Rosyth, also competes at international level. Sailing the Europe, she came third in the '92 Olympic Trials and went on to win the Spanish Olympic Regatta.

Out of sailing for much of '93 following a back operation, Anne recovered sufficiently to regain her title as ladies singlehanded national champion at the RYA's Ladies' Championships in October.

Anne has also won a place in the British team for the Spanish Olympic Regatta and the Miami Midwinters. She will be leaving the Navy this year in order to concentrate on the 1996 Olympic Games.

The pair are looking forward to competing in Spain and America at the same time after having worked — and sailed — at opposite ends of the country for most of '93. They now plan to spend more time training together at Stokes Bay Sailing Club on the Solent.

Bosnia airlift

HELICOPTERS from 845 Sqn took part in the evacuation of injured and sick refugees during last month's Operation Angel, a UN-backed mission to fly out the seriously ill from Bosnia.

The three Sea Kings, under the command of senior pilot Lt Cdr David Key, first evacuated five injured children and their close relatives from Tuzla, in central Bosnia. When they arrived at Tuzla the refugees were brought from the local hospital which, only that morning, had been hit by shell fire.

Before boarding the helicopters they were checked over by a RAF aero-medical team led by Sqn Ldr Victor Wallace and they were then flown to Split, on the Adriatic coast.

On arrival in Split the refugees were transferred across to a specially-converted Canadian Air Force Hercules transport plane for the next leg of their journey to Ancona, in Italy.

The children, all under 11 years of age, were then flown on to the UK for treatment of their illnesses and injuries.

The three Sea Kings were in action the following day when, braving poor weather conditions, they evacuated 30 refugees, including 14 children, from Visoko, 20km north of Sarajevo.



TWO OLD LADIES PAY OFF

A CASE of "hello... goodbye" for the Royal Navy last month. While the Hunt-class mine countermeasures vessel HMS Atherstone rededicated after an eight-month refit at Rosyth, two old ladies of the Fleet, HM ships Scylla and Nurton, sailed into Portsmouth for the last time.

No cash for A-bomb veterans

A REPORT from the National Radiological Protection Board has found there is no link between cancers suffered by 20,000 Servicemen and their role as witnesses to atom bomb trials on Christmas Island, in the Indian Ocean, during the 1950s and 60s.

The announcement, made by Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind, has come as a major setback to veterans campaigning for compensation.

Flying a paying-off pennant as long as the ship herself, HMS Nurton, above, arrived in Portsmouth from patrol duties with the Northern Ireland Squadron having steamed a total of 326,273 miles during her 37 years' service.

Wooden hull

HMS Nurton is the oldest ship serving in the Navy and, with the exception, of HMS Victory, is the last wooden-hulled ship in service. She is also the last operational ship of the Ton class mine countermeasures vessels — a recent visit to Gibraltar proved she was as sturdy as ever, a credit to the 40-year-old Ton design!

Originally launched as a minesweeper at Harland and Wolff, Belfast, in 1957, she was converted to a mine-hunter in 1964 in Portsmouth. In 1991 she was converted again in Portsmouth for patrol duties and has served since then in Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile the Leader class

frigate HMS Scylla returned to Portsmouth to pay off after a six-month deployment in the South Atlantic.

The last ship to be built at Devonport, she was laid down in 1967, first commissioned in February 1970 and underwent an extensive modernisation in the 1980s when her 4.5 inch guns and anti-submarine mor-

tars were removed and replaced by Exocet anti-ship missiles, the Seawolf anti-aircraft and anti-missile system and completely updated sonar equipment.

As the sole remaining Leander she represents the end of an era with the phasing out of steam-driven technology in the RN.



● Top, left: The flag is lowered for the last time on board HMS Nurton.

● Top: HMS Nurton, the last wooden-hulled ship in service, sails into Portsmouth harbour flying a paying-off pennant as long as the ship.

● Inset: HMS Scylla, the last warship built in Devonport, raises her paying-off pennant off Spithead.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dave Coombs.

Seamen rescued during storms

AIRCREW of two Sea King SAR helicopters and a team of Royal Navy divers were key figures in the rescue of 26 people from vessels battered by wild weather which hit Britain in December.

The 15-man crew of a sinking chemical tanker were snatched to safety in atrocious weather on December 9 by an aircraft from RN air station Culdrose. Two days later a helicopter from Portland evacuated 10 passengers from a Portsmouth to Jersey ferry which caught fire in mid-Channel.

Later the Portland aircraft was called to the aid of a yachtswoman trapped in an air bubble beneath a capsized trimaran off the Isle of Wight. Members of Portsmouth Area Clearance Diving Unit were called in and rescued her after an operation which lasted more than six hours.

Crew of the sinking tanker, the Maltese registered Grape One, were "very lucky men" according to Brixham Coastguard. "The Sea King crews did a splendid job," said their ops officer Peter Baker.

Lt Simon Daw, winchman in the Culdrose aircraft, descended 15 times to the tanker which was carrying highly inflammable xylene. He made his descents, to rescue two Italian officers and 13 Filipinos, in a Force 9 gale with the ship listing 60 degrees. The operation took 35 minutes and ended three hours before Grape One sank.

Other crew members of the

aircraft were Lts. Dave Ffrench and Keith Bishop, and CPOACMN Terry Francis.

Ten passengers winched off the ship by the Sea King from Portland included a 70-year-old woman who had a paralysed arm. The operation was described by a spokesman for Portland as "tricky. The ship was beam-on to the sea and was rolling heavily. The passengers had to be winched off the bridge wing."

Winchman POACMN Adrian Rogers lifted off the elderly woman by doubling-up with her for the lift.

All the passengers were flown to Guernsey Airport where, although uninjured, they were taken to hospital to recover from their ordeal.

Fifteen minutes after completing that rescue, the aircraft, piloted by Lt Jonathan Wallace, was called to the Needles in the Isle of Wight where yachtswoman Heidi Bell (26) was trapped beneath the capsized catamaran Triharda.

PO Rogers, aided by the third crew member POACMN Steve Larsen, descended to the catamaran with diving gear. Operating in rough, open sea conditions he found he couldn't reach Heidi through the maze of masts and rigging in the water.

Eventually the trimaran was towed to the sheltered waters of Totland Bay where LS(D) Gary Birch, with spare breathing equipment, reached Heidi and guided her to the surface.

Paying tribute to her courage Gary said: "Heidi was very brave indeed. She was under there in the cold and dark for hours but she kept her nerve until the end." His colleagues in the diving team were CPO Steve Bielby and AB(D) Mark Jones.

Heidi was taken to RNH Haslar to recover.

GRAND RIVER OVER GREAT WATER

INDIAN braves of the Six Nations of the Grand River travelled from Canada for the rededication of HMS Brave at Devonport last month.

A delegation of six, led by Chief Steve Williams, accepted the invitation from the Type 22 frigate and flew across the Atlantic from their home reservation in Ontario.

They were cementing an affiliation with the ship begun when she visited Canada in 1990.

Also present was the ship's sponsor, Lady Averil Bryson, and representatives from other close affiliations with Dover District Council and the Haberdashers livery company.



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